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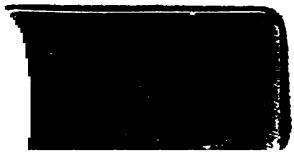

MAXWELL.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "SAYINGS AND DOINGS."

Hook, Theodore Edward

"Critics, whene'er I write, in every scene,
Discover meanings that I never mean.
Whatever character I bring to view
I am the father of the child, 'tis true,
But, every babe his christ'ning owes to you.
'The Comic Poet's eye,' with humorous air
Glancing from Watling Street to Grosv'nor Square—
He bodies forth a light ideal train,
And turns to shape the phantoms of his brain,
Meanwhile your fancy takes more partial aim,
'And gives the airy nothings place and name.'"

COLMAN THE ELDER.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,
NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

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ERRATA.

Vol. I. page 1, line 5, *for* "the Doctor," *read* "Godfrey."

Vol. II. page 276, bottom line, *for* "the hearts of each were full and heavy," *read* "the heart of each was full and heavy."

——— page 281, *for* "Crown," *read* "George," *et passim*.

MAXWELL.

CHAPTER I.

"Can I forget him?—drive him from my soul?
Oh! he will still be present to my eyes.
His words will ever echo in my ears—
Still will he be the torture of my days,
Bane of my life, and ruin of my glory." SMITH.

WHEN Somerford received Katharine's letter at Cheltenham, his feelings, previously excited by all the public reports of the ruin and flight of the family, took precisely the turn that she had anticipated; but as I have already presumed that her description of their actual situation was of a character rather to soothe and satisfy his apprehensions for her comfort, than awaken any very violent alarm upon the subject, he was gratified with the letter, at the same time that he could not but sigh as he repressed a hope, which only could be realized by the death of

another, and resolved, if it were possible, by reason on one hand, and amusement on the other, to endeavour to banish from his mind, one, who although she had excluded him from her heart, he felt was but too dear to his affections.

Among the numerous Indian connexions and acquaintances whom Mr. Macleod found at Cheltenham, Somerford was extremely well received; the elderly ladies of the *qui hi* circles fêtéd and petted him, and he was "so interesting," and "so agreeable," and "sang so nicely," and played the flute "so sweetly," that, following the lead of Mrs. Mackirkincroft, (who had also made Cheltenham her head-quarters,) the *belles* of the watering-place nearly worried him to death with civility.

But Charles Somerford's natural abilities and general attainments qualified him for something better than a dangler after dowdy dowagers; he was destined to soar into higher circles, and breathe a better atmosphere than that of musk and japan. It so happened, that his friend Macleod, who had formed a very favourable opinion of his merit and talents, had been specially recommended to the notice of a nobleman residing at Cheltenham, whose attention had been for many years directed towards the

political state of British India, and whose views and objects, an acquaintance of his lordship's, Lord Bryanston, had imagined likely to be very much assisted by the information which Mr. Macleod, experienced as he was, by long and confidential service in the Twankey-twaddle department, could afford him on his favourite topic. The immediate consequence of this special recommendation of Mr. Macleod to the Earl of Lessingham, was an invitation to dinner, in the course of conversation after which, the visitor spoke of his young friend Major Somerford, and this led to an invitation for *him;* the consequences of which, however, most assuredly neither Charles nor the nabob anticipated.

The Earl of Lessingham was staying at Cheltenham for the benefit of the health of his granddaughter, Lady Emily Denham, who, before the close of the London season, had broken down; and having exhibited symptoms of incipient consumption, had been exiled to the walks and waters of Cheltenham, in the hope of restoring her to health and strength. Somerford once received into Lord Lessingham's agreeable domestic circle, appeared almost immediately to have established himself in the noble lord's good

opinion, at least if the Earl's estimation of his qualities might be judged by the warmth and frequency of his invitations; for he had scarcely broken the ice of introduction, when he found himself honoured with a general bidding to the house, and pressed by its aristocratic master to give him and Lady Emily his company whenever he was able to do so.

This was, perhaps, the most flattering mark of attention that Charles had ever yet received; and certainly the most gratifying, inasmuch as common observation pointed out to him that his new and exalted friend's warmth and kindness could have their origin only in a feeling of affection and regard which his own merit or manners had inspired. He was delighted and fascinated, and hesitated not to avail himself of the advantage so liberally offered, which, however, besides being in the highest degree agreeable to himself, excited in an equal proportion all the ill-nature, jealousy, and illiberality of the smaller fry amongst whom he had, in the beginning of his career at Cheltenham, *tritonized*, and who felt highly indignant at being, as they considered, deserted for the peer and his parties.

It was lucky, in such a scandal-loving situation as the meddling middling circle of an over-

grown watering-place, that poor Lady Emily Denham's ill state of health excluded her very much from the general society at her noble grandfather's hospitable house; for although it was extremely improbable that a nobleman, who, with all his excellent qualities, was notoriously proud of his birth and ancestry, would do so unwise a thing as encourage a constant association between the future possessor of his title and estates and a major of a "marching regiment" of foot, whose only rank in society was derived from his commission, with any other view or object than that of gratifying himself with his conversation and society; still, malice and mischief are so constantly at work in such communities, that if her ladyship had been well enough to mix constantly with her grandfather's parties, and be seen about the rides and drives, in company with a handsome young officer, almost domesticated in the family, the thing would have been set down as settled, and the result probably have been the expulsion of poor Somerford from a most agreeable family, of which it never would have entered his head, in his most romantic mood, to propose himself as a permanent member.

Lady Emily, however, was always present

when the circle was reduced; and the languor which illness, too rapidly gaining upon her constitution, threw over her beautiful features, gave to the natural sweetness and serenity of her countenance an additional interest, the influence of which, it required all the caution of a prudent man to withstand. One short season only had she graced the *salons* of London, and more hearts than one or two were left aching, when it was found absolutely necessary to remove her from the scene of her unconscious conquests, to pure air and quiet pursuits; and here she was, domesticated with her grandfather and a female friend, once her governess, patiently suffering and sinking, as it appeared, into an untimely grave.

Never was being more ardently attached to another than Lord Lessingham to this orphan daughter of his only son. Upon *her* would devolve, at his death, the barony of Lessingham, although the earldom would be extinct; the object of his life had been to see her well and suitably married—now it seemed but too probable that his beautiful flower would be nipped in the bud, and that all his tenderest hopes and best affections would be blighted by her loss.

Luckily, as I have said, or rather, unluckily, for the tattling tabbies of the tea-table, Lady Emily was not well enough to be seen much in public in company with Somerford; but it was extremely curious to perceive, as the reader himself will be surprised to hear, that when Lord Lessingham gave Charles the general invitation to a house scarcely accessible but by the *élite* of society, one of his motives seemed to be, the gratification and amusement of his granddaughter, who had received the new visitor with a warmth and interest not usual in her manner, and which convinced the Earl that his society would be agreeable to her.

This very great readiness to accommodate himself to the wish of his darling child, may seem civil overmuch to those who take merely a worldly view of things, and who cannot fail to marvel at the want of caution which a nobleman of Lord Lessingham's rank and character displayed in bringing a beautiful, amiable, and accomplished girl into a constant association with an agreeable, handsome, and sensible plebeian, and that too, at a time when illness had added to the interest she must always excite, and, on the other hand, had attuned her mind to the reception of kindnesses and at-

tentions which, under the circumstances of her helpless—almost hopeless—situation, an affectionate being like Charles Somerford would be so very likely to bestow.

Somerford continued this intimacy from day to day, until he himself felt that his situation was growing delicate in the extreme. The idle nonsense he heard talked—the observations which were made, even in his presence, upon his constant association with Lord Lessingham's family, since they did not offensively refer to Lady Emily, went for nothing, but he could not avoid feeling a consciousness that she herself met him with increasing pleasure, and lingered longer than she had at first been wont to do in conversation with him, after repeated warnings of the lateness of the hour from her indulgent relative; he seemed to himself to be acting dishonourably by continuing his intimacy, and perhaps—although he attributed half his apprehensions to his own vanity—engaging the affections of one, an union with whom was wholly and entirely out of the question—and nothing but the dread of appearing to believe himself admired, when perhaps he was not cared about, hindered him from coming forward and explaining to Lord Lessingham the

sort of feeling by which he was actuated, and the prudence, as it seemed to him, of making his visits less frequent; but whenever he had nearly wound himself up to such a declaration, he found his noble host so pointedly kind, and so unreservedly anxious for his presence, that he felt it would be most unjust and ungenerous to check the course of such disinterested friendship, by supposing himself the dangerous person which his noble host certainly did not consider him to be.

At times, the Earl would sit at a distance from the young people, and leave them to a *tête-à-tête;* and during these scenes, Somerford saw him gazing on them, and, as he could not help feeling, not unconscious of the character of the conversation in which they were engaged; for although love formed no part of the subject under discussion, the soft and tender manner of Somerford, and the sweet, gracious reception which Lady Emily gave his attentions, were quite sufficient evidence to betray the state of her feelings, to one much less versed in the world and its ways than the Earl of Lessingham.

But there were yet stranger events in store: one of the lovers of this lovely girl, who had been caught, enchanted, and enchained during the season, arrived in Cheltenham—a young,

handsome, and wealthy baronet, representing in parliament the county, of which a large portion belonged to himself. He made a visit to Lord Lessingham's house, and was admitted.

Somerford was there—when was he not?—and although his faithful heart was impenetrable to love, and although his sense of propriety, and his self-knowledge, checked on their first appearance any symptoms of a passion which must be hopeless, he felt somehow uneasy and displeased, as he saw the confident manner of the accomplished man of fashion, whose grace and ease during his stay, put Somerford entirely out of humour with himself; but this feeling wore off surprisingly as he perceived Lady Emily listening to the young dandy's florid and animated description of a round of London gaieties, with coldness, and even inattention. A look full of intelligence, and something very like affection, which she threw on Charles, even while her new visitor's eyes were intently fixed on *her*, attracted his attention, and checked the volubility of his address. The visit terminated, and Lord Lessingham permitted his agreeable friend to depart without any show of cordiality, and without even a hinted wish for the pleasure of seeing him again.

This difference between the manner dis-

played by Lord Lessingham towards this aristocratic acquaintance, and that which immediately afterwards he exhibited towards Charles, struck Somerford more forcibly than anything which had yet occurred during his domestication with the family. He was treated with a confidence and affection for which he could not account, except by believing that for some reason or other, Lord Lessingham had resolved to select him for the husband of his angelic granddaughter,—a supposition so wild and romantic, that it seemed the height of insanity to encourage it for a moment; and yet it made so much impression upon him, that he lived in constant dread lest the Earl, with some view of that nature, should proceed to inquire the particulars of his birth, parentage, and circumstances, the candid disclosure of which, would, in all probability, work his degradation, and expulsion from the family.

One day, in the midst of his doubts and apprehensions, and when Lady Emily appeared rather better, though not stronger than usual, he heard of the expected presence of some new arrivals at dinner with no great emotion, since he heard Lady Emily call them old, and Lord Lessingham vote them bores—but they were particular friends, and had such hearts!

It was in the forenoon of this day that Somerford and Lady Emily were together alone: she was ill—worse than she had been—and there was a look of settled sorrow in her eye that rivetted his gaze.

"How sweet and fresh the air is to-day!" said Lady Emily; "I should like to venture out—but I am too weak—too languid."

There was a pause in the conversation. Somerford still kept his eyes fixed on her—he saw too plainly, as he feared, that hopes for her eventual recovery were vain: he spoke not.

"I had a dreadful dream last night," said she; "I dreamt that you and I were together in a forest, and that a band of ruffians rushed upon us, and tore us asunder. I awoke in such horror, that I have not yet recovered it."

"I am too happy, Lady Emily," said Somerford, "sad as my fate was in the vision, to be of so much importance as to form a subject for your dreams."

"Charles Somerford," said Lady Emily, in a faltering but impressive tone, "whatever my dreams may be, my waking thoughts are still more fearful."

"Why say so, Lady Emily?" said Charles.

"I feel," replied she, "that I am sinking into my grave; and although death is the

certain lot of all, I am but young, and I am sure I form an important part of my poor grandfather's happiness.—You must be kind to him when I am gone."

"Come, Lady Emily," said Somerford, "I must not allow this. You must think of something else. You are recovering fast."

"No, no," said she; "I do not murmur, for it grieves my grandfather to hear me complain; but I shall never recover. It is to me a blessing that he has become acquainted with *you*—you suit him admirably, and he is warmly attached to you. Indeed," added she, "I—" she could not proceed—she covered her face with her hands, and burst into tears.

Somerford's heart beat: in tears—sweet, suffering angel! He stood upon the very edge of a precipice—one step would decide all.—Katharine Maxwell was in his mind's-eye—the fond, devoted Kate—the luckless, faithless, married Kate. Emily, the lovely Emily was bathed in tears—she had called him Charles—her look, her manner—all spoke too plainly the real character of her feelings.

"Dear Lady Emily," said Somerford, "let me entreat you not to agitate and distress yourself thus; all will be well, and we shall yet be happy."

"No, no," said Lady Emily, "*I* know myself; I might have been happy, but it is all too late."

It was evident to Charles, that it was not too late, but that, on the contrary, this very moment was the precise time at which, if he dared to make the offer, she would accept him; still, still, his first love—aye—but then she was lost to him—lost, perhaps for ever.

"Emily," said he, taking her hand, "you must calm yourself; I have much to say—much to tell you, that perhaps will interest you."

"If it is about yourself," said Emily, "you know that it will."

"But," continued he, "I tremble to make the disclosure—my feelings are uncontrollable—I am ill fitted to soothe *your* agitation—I cannot command even my own. Oh, Lady Emily!"

"Have mercy on me!" said Lady Emily, interrupting and breaking from him; "have mercy upon me! this is all madness—madness. Heaven forgive me! leave me, pray leave me, Somerford—for God's-sake leave me!"

"Not yet," said Charles. "If I could but confide my cares and sorrows to you. I have been to blame—I—"

"No, no," said Emily; "pray go—let me entreat—implore you—my grandfather will be here directly; if he sees me so agitated, he will be terrified. What have I done?—I am lost—lost. Never, never can I look up again!"

The manner of Somerford had in a moment convinced the acute and sensitive Emily that she had committed herself to a man who did not reciprocate her affection; her pride, her feelings, her dignity, were compromised; her delicacy wounded—mortally wounded, and he who could have worshipped her, was agonized to the very heart, because circumstances—a complication of circumstances—compelled him to adopt the conduct he had pursued.

He was now placed in the most painful situation; remaining any longer on the same terms of intimacy with Lord Lessingham's family, seemed out of the question; yet to withdraw himself suddenly would be to excite the suspicions of the Earl, while to stay in the society of the woe-worn girl, to whom his presence now must be a cause of constant irritation and grief, would be cruel in the extreme.

As to the question of marrying her, he felt that while a chance of possessing Kate (whose heart, after her last letter, he was convinced was as much his own as ever) remained, he could not,

even with the consciousness of all the difficulties which interposed, throw that chance away by uniting himself to another; and then he argued further, that if he so compromised what he considered his honour and fidelity, and at once declared an affection for Lady Emily, which most certainly nothing but his pledge to Katharine could have prevented, what probability was there, that Lord Lessingham would ever consent to a marriage where the disparity of Somerford's rank and fortune to that of his granddaughter seemed to form an insuperable obstacle and objection.

Matters were destined to come to a close somewhat sooner than was expected by some of the parties. Somerford led Lady Emily to her boudoir. She leaned on his arm, and he felt her tremble as they walked along. Her maid was luckily waiting for her, and Somerford resigned the wretched girl to her care, and when they parted, Lady Emily shook hands with him cordially—she spoke not—but her looks were more eloquent than such words would have been, as she would have dared to use.

What to do, how to act, Somerford could not decide; the day was far advanced, and of course no step which he might eventually feel it necessary to take, could be proceeded in, until the

morrow; yet he dreaded to meet the eye of Lady Emily at dinner, where he knew she would make an effort to appear, to quiet the apprehensions of her grandfather on the score of her health. Never was man more embarrassed—more mortified—more distressed.

It may seem cruel to leave him in this state of suspence and agitation,

"Racked by duty—forced by love,"

but it must be so; the reader's attention is wanted elsewhere, and he must content himself for the present with imagining the line of conduct which Somerford eventually thought it proper to pursue, always remembering, if he *should* fall, what were his temptations: constantly associated with beauty, accomplishment, rank, and talent—conscious that the lovely and interesting creature with whom he was domesticated had given him her heart, and even believing, from all he saw, incredible as it might appear, that the Earl of Lessingham would not hazard his granddaughter's unhappiness, or the distress of her mind, by refusing to receive her orphan lover as her husband.

On the other hand, were all the ties by which his youthful feelings, and the memory of his

first love, bound him to Katharine. Yet *she* had consented to abandon all hopes of *him*—she had pledged her faith to another. When he first came to Cheltenham, his object was to endeavour to overcome the recollection of his early life, and having been discarded by Miss Maxwell, try to forget the charms of Mrs. Apperton; and in this disposition, founded upon the best principles of reason and morality, he might have remained, had it not been for the letter from Madeira. In that, she explained how she was prevailed upon to marry another, and how induced to believe that Charles had first abandoned *her*. *Then* it was, that, in spite of his first prudent resolves to drive her from his memory, Somerford's smouldering passion for Kate burst out anew, and he resolved to keep his heart for her alone; and if fate decreed that they should never be united, content himself by living upon the memory of happier days.

What effect the influence that such a being as Lady Emily possessed, had, under all combining circumstances, upon this honourable, and almost chivalrous determination, time, and time only, can exhibit.

CHAPTER II.

" When souls that should agree to will the same,
To have one common object for their wishes,
Look different ways, regardless of each other,
Think what a train of wretchedness ensues!"

ROWE.

THE reader may recollect, that when Hanningham made the proposal to Edward Maxwell to take him into partnership, he stated one of the inducements to such an arrangement to be, the relief his superintendence of the business would afford him during his absence from Madeira on occasional visits to England. It was in one of these trips that he had obtained the golden prize which he now actually possessed, in the shape of a beautiful and excellent wife; and with a view of indulging her by a temporary residence with her family, as well as to settle some accounts and perhaps increase his mercantile connexions, he was about to carry her to her native land, and remain there for five or six

months, during which period, Edward would remain the ostensible lord of the house, receiving orders and executing them, and receiving visitors, and delighting them with his kindness and hospitality—a very essential part of the conduct of a Madeira merchant, as I have always endeavoured to impress upon my readers.

When Hanningham, amongst other good reasons which he gave Edward to induce him to accept the most beneficial offer that could be made to him, enumerated these, the tyro in trade thought it was only a remote contingency, and rather considered the allusion to his friend's quitting the island as a new inducement for *him* to enter into his scheme, than a serious reference to an event, not only determined upon, but actually near at hand.

It turned out, however, that the merchant had made all his arrangements for repairing to England so soon as he should have given his new associate a sufficient insight into the conduct of his concern. Senior clerks, and experienced warehousemen managed the practical part of the business, so that, as it is in government, the change of heads of departments, however it might affect the general policy, had very little to do with the carrying on of affairs,

seeing that the machinery continued the same, although the master-hand might be different.

Edward, however, felt a sort of diffidence, when Hanningham announced to him, that he was, after the next three weeks, to assume the sovereignty of the wine-pipes. He was placed in a new situation—a sort of responsibility for which he was not prepared, was to rest upon his shoulders. Yet, as it was to be, he, of course, must assume his pre-eminence, inasmuch as he had sufficient knowledge of human nature to know that there is scarcely a man to be found, who, if he is offered a high place, will refuse it, on the score of a consciousness of inability to fulfil its functions.

Maxwell, who had borne the calamities which had befallen him with a wonderful degree of philosophy, seemed to sink under the flagrant ingratitude of Apperton, of whose proceedings they were kept in perfect ignorance, but whose conduct Hanningham was resolved to investigate in the closest manner during his stay in England; for it appeared to him, as a man of business, that however Maxwell might shrink from the public gaze of society at home, his exile was purely voluntary; he had suffered a total loss of property—what more could befall

him? not a shadow of guilt hung over his character or transactions. Indeed, Hanningham wished to propose that the surgeon and Kate should accompany them to England, unless, previous to their departure, some intelligence should arrive which might render such a proceeding imprudent or impolitic.

The idea of again separating from Edward, and that, with the certainty of re-uniting herself to her heartless husband, was most painful to Kate, who clung with great earnestness to a difficulty which interposed itself to their accompanying the Hanninghams, as the only chance of escape from what she could not fail to anticipate as a combination of ills likely to assail her on her arrival in her native country. This difficulty arose from the circumstance of Hanningham having arranged to visit the Island of Fayal on his way to England—a somewhat circuitous voyage, and only to be performed by special contrivance.

It seemed that at Villa da Horta, the principal town of Fayal, Hanningham had a sort of agent established, whose particular business there, was not very clearly defined, but who might be supposed by his enemies to have been concerned in the purchase of a peculiarly nasty

composition, denominated Pico wine, manufactured from the grape which grows on the sides of the gigantic mountain that lifts its head far above the clouds, in the island so called, and which is divided only by a narrow channel from the island in which this agent was actually established.

Hanningham had, it appeared, never seen the person who had taken charge of this branch concern, whatever it was, that connected him with the Madeira house, and it seemed that their communications had become so particularly confidential, that nothing but a personal interview could be relied upon for the purpose of making them effectively. Maxwell had, from the slight specimen to which he had been exposed, taken a violent dislike to sea voyages, and therefore it was, that superadded to all his other objections to returning to England by the present opportunity, the entreaties of his daughter not to subject her and himself to a protracted and difficult navigation, had a powerful effect upon him in strengthening his refusal to accompany his excellent friends to their native country.

While, however, their departure was yet under discussion, the island was suddenly agitated by an event which, if anticipated at all, had not been

expected to occur so soon. This was no other than the arrival of his Excellency Lord Hillingdon, on his outward bound voyage to an Indian government. The appearance of a fine frigate with the union jack at her mizen, caused an immediate bustle, and moonsheils and bullock-carts were speedily in motion in the streets of Funchal, for the transport of passengers and luggage, in case her important inhabitant should be graciously pleased to land.

The sensation created in small communities by the sudden introduction of a great man, can only be duly appreciated by people who have witnessed its effect. The disproportioned liveliness of the jackass among the chickens, so humorously referred to in one of our modern farces, is no bad illustration to the eagerness with which the whole small fry of a colony set out on the race of civility, or servility, to a magnate like Lord Hillingdon, with the imposing epithet of Excellency prefixed to his title, and the magical letters, G. C. B., appended to it—every one of the hurriers and bustlers wishing his excellency at the bottom of the Red Sea, or the Black Sea, or any other coloured sea in the world, rather than in the particular spot selected for his temporary patronage and residence.

No sooner had his majesty's ship let go her anchor, than the sound of cannon complimentary to the British flag was heard. The salute returned, the Portuguese authorities were zealously employed in ascertaining when and where his Excellency would land, and what were the proper forms and ceremonies to be observed upon the occasion; for, as I have already said elsewhere, great men afloat are so jealous of their pretensions and preliminaries, that a gun less in a salute to which a governor was entitled, would unsettle his Excellency's temper and disposition for the whole of his stay, or perhaps involve two countries, in perfect amity at the moment, in a bloody and expensive war.

Governors, and generals, and admirals, on their arrival at Madeira, generally fall to the lot of one or two of the leading mercantile houses; and the adventures of many a well-remembered day of pleasure and hospitality passed there, are recounted on the hottest shore of Hindostan, or in the remotest of African islands, where the names of Gordon, Keir, or Blackburne stand most honourably recorded. Hanningham's was, however, but a secondary house, he himself a young man and a young mer-

chant, therefore he was free from all care and anxiety about the arrival of the expedition, although not certain that some of the official minnows might not grace his hospitable board. He was therefore equally busy with his neighbours; all the available rooms of his spacious house were turned into bed-chambers, and the highest floor in the building was selected for the accommodation of those who had a claim to the highest posts.

Maxwell, who felt a sort of shyness and awkwardness in being recognized as a refugée by his inquisitive friend, the new governor, still thought, that from such a source, if he had any opportunity of conversing with him, he might perhaps derive some more authentic information, not only of the popular opinion concerning himself and his flight, but of public affairs in general, by which he might regulate his future proceedings; more especially those connected with the voyage which his affectionate friend Hanningham considered it absolutely necessary that he should take. Whatever embarrassment the surgeon might have felt at the renewal of his acquaintance with Lord Hillingdon, under the circumstances, the consciousness of guilt could in no manner affect it; for

the most malignant of his enemies could charge him with nothing but a blind reliance upon his son-in-law, to whom alone all the misconduct of their concerns could be attributable.

Accordingly, Maxwell determined to pay his respects to the governor-general, who was to hold a levee at the house where he had fixed his residence, on the day after his landing. Edward was to accompany him in his mercantile capacity, and the whole party from Hanningham's were invited to meet his Excellency at dinner in the evening.

It is too notorious, and too evident to all of us, to require a word of comment, that every one believes himself and his particular concerns to be the objects of constant and universal interest and observation; and Maxwell, man of the world as he was, could not divest himself of the notion that all London was occupied, and had been occupied ever since he left it, in discussing his demerits and his migration, debating the misconduct of his son-in-law, pitying his misfortunes, and sympathizing in his distress. Good, easy man! for three days after his flight, his own personal friends said they were very sorry for it, and called him a kind, good-hearted person—said, his was a pleasant house to be at,

and that Kate was *so* kind, and such a daughter, and had such a heart, and so on; but by the evening of the fourth day, they had ceased to wonder where they had run off to, and before the next Sunday, their names were never heard. As to the public in general, one solitary paragraph in the city article of a morning paper, mentioned that a well-known surgeon at the west-end of the town was amongst the serious sufferers by the month's speculations—and there an end. So that when he advanced up the large drawing-room, in the bay-window of which, his Excellency, Lord Hillingdon, G. C. B. was ensconced, convinced that his appearance would throw his Excellency into an ecstacy of surprise and wonderment, his own astonishment far exceeded all he expected to perceive in the noble lord, when his Excellency, after looking for a moment at him through an opera-glass, which he held in his right-hand, recognized him without emotion, and accosted him just as if he had met him in St. James's Street, or in any other of his accustomed walks.

"Ah, Maxwell, how d'ye do?" said his Excellency; "what, are you living here, eh!"

"Yes, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Come for your health, eh?" said his Excellency; "fine climate, is not it? hot in

summer, eh? What—don't you find great benefit from the air, eh?"

"Why, my lord," said Maxwell, "I should not have come here from choice; but (as your Excellency knows) my misfortunes—"

"Oh," said his Excellency, "ah, ah, by-the-bye, I do recollect something about it—you burnt your fingers in the funds—what?—bad speculation—great many people ruined—served them right—don't you think so, eh? Fools and their money soon parted—what?"

"Why, my lord," said Maxwell, endeavouring to interest his Excellency so far as to lead him to the never-fading subject of his own thoughts and cogitations, "those who lead the unwary are to be blamed. I had great reliance upon Mr. Apperton, whom your Excellency knows married my daughter."

"Oh, I do," said Lord Hillingdon; "I recollect now—I never could recollect—Apple-pye, I used to call him. Ah, sad fellow that, wasn't he? I saw something about him in some of the courts, and I thought of *you;* I recollect—we had such a laugh about something, I forget what. He's dead, isn't he?"

"Not that I know of," said Maxwell; "is he, my lord? to *me* that intelligence would be very important."

"Upon my life," said his Excellency, "I don't know—somebody, they told me, was dead—but I am not sure that it was not you they said was dead, or gone to America, or something. I recollect being very much interested at the time, because a groom of mine, an invaluable servant, broke his leg or his arm, I forget which, now, and I wanted you to set it; but I don't recollect whether it was then I heard of your death, or of the death of—what d'ye call him?"

"Apperton, my lord."

"Ah," said his lordship, laughing, "Apperton—that's it—he! he! he!"

"Allow me to present Mr. Bamford to your Excellency," said somebody near Maxwell, to whom his Excellency forthwith turned; at which opportune moment, a crowd of aspirants for his Excellency's smiles pressing forward, the surgeon was shut out of the circle, and left beyond its confines, with just so much of information as could not fail to unsettle his mind, and derange all his prospects and calculations, without satisfying one doubt, or allaying one apprehension.

"Come," said Maxwell to his son, "let us go home; that man has no feeling; he is too much occupied with himself to care about *me*;

and all he has done is to excite a new train of thoughts and anticipations in my mind about the fate of Apperton. We will say nothing of this to Kate," continued the surgeon; "perhaps we may gather some further information from some more considerate person, in the course of to-day or to-morrow."

What particular sentiment Maxwell was apprehensive of exciting in his daughter's bosom by the rumour of her husband's death, it might not be delicate perhaps, under all the circumstances, to inquire; but he could not help attaching some credit to the confused statement of his noble friend, seeing that another opportunity had occurred of writing, of which Apperton had not availed himself. Edward went so far in expressing his feelings, that as they turned the corner of the Rua dal Bispo, he ventured to say that he thought the news was too good to be true.

This might sound uncharitable, and even improper, but when Apperton's conduct is taken into consideration, the nature of his connexions, and their evident disposition towards the Maxwells; and with all these, the release it would be for Kate, and the power it would give her of realizing the early dreams of her happiness; our young wine-merchant may, perhaps, be excused. Still, however, while they were in

doubt, it was prudent to observe a perfect silence on the subject as far as Kate was concerned, since, even were the fact so, it might not be impossible that Charles had, before the event occurred, destroyed the still lingering hopes of his once-loved Kate. That he was in a somewhat perilous position we know, and should he have fallen!—but it is not my business to anticipate.

Maxwell, on his return home, communicated to Hanningham what had occurred at the levee, and Hanningham admitted the credibility of the report, connected as it was with Apperton's very extraordinary and continued silence. It was clear that none of the Biddles would trouble their heads to announce his death to the Maxwells, from whom there was nothing to be expected, even if they knew how to address them; and however confused the notions of the governor-general might be as to matters which did not concern him, it seemed very unlikely that he should have received an impression that Apperton was actually dead, if something had not really occurred to impress upon his mind an event connected with a man whose name he could never command his memory sufficiently to recollect.

Upon the whole, Hanningham and the two

Maxwells, after considering and debating the matter over and over again, came to the conclusion, that the probability was greatly in favour of the story. However, the next day, Hanningham thought, would put an end to their doubts, inasmuch as the surgeon of the frigate had on board a file of English papers, from which in all probability they would learn the real fact; the papers actually in circulation from the ship, being only the *latest* from Plymouth, (the recency of their date being their great merit,) from those, the anxious inquirers could gain no information respecting that which had happened, perhaps, more than a month or six weeks previous to the departure of the vessel from England.

Maxwell was naturally much agitated and worried by the intelligence so abruptly and loosely given by Lord Hillingdon, and not a little discomposed at what he felt the haughty and distant manner of his Excellency; his entire ignorance of what was of so much importance to *him*, and the careless way in which he glanced to the topics in which he was most interested, and then struck off at a tangent into mere matters of form and ceremony to receive a man whom he had never seen before, and

whom, in all probability, he would never see again, wounded the feelings of the poor exile; nor was he less annoyed by what he thought a decided change in Lord Hillingdon's conduct and bearing towards him, by an apprehension that the alteration had taken place in consequence of reports prejudicial to his character as a man of honour. Poor Maxwell! long as he had lived, and able as he was to judge of others, he had not yet learned to decide impartially where self was concerned; else would he have known in a moment that Lord Hillingdon at Brighton and his Excellency the governor-general at Madeira were two distinct persons. His Excellency was playing the royal game of humbug in the first stage of his progress to supremacy. The thing was new to him, and he liked it. He heard cannon roar when he left the ship, and other cannon roar responsive as he approached the beach; the smoke as it curled from their brazen mouths was incense to his vanity; and when he saw guards turned out and bare-headed councillors waiting his approach, it gave him a foretaste of splendour to come, and all minor objects faded from his view.

Here was Major O'Callaghan ready to take

his Excellency's hat, and Captain Guffinshaw in attendance for his Excellency's gloves; his Excellency's military secretary on his Excellency's right, and his Excellency's private secretary on his Excellency's left; and there were deputy-adjutants general, and deputy quarter-masters general, and assistant quarter-masters general, and assistant adjutants-general, in scarlet and silver, and deputy commissaries general, and assistant deputy assistant commissaries general, in blue and gold, and town majors, and fort majors, and brigade majors, all destined for the service of his majesty in various parts of his distant dominions, swelling the train of his Excellency the governor-general, who found himself acting king, in a wine-merchant's drawing-room at Madeira.

Could it be expected that Maxwell's griefs, or Maxwell's pleasure, or his hopes, or his fears, could have any weight with such a man, at such a moment? Maxwell, however, thought differently, and imagined that, after dinner perhaps he might edge in an inquiry or two of his Excellency, which might again lead to the subject nearest his heart; and this expectation chiefly led him to fulfil the engagement he had accepted, to meet his Excellency at the entertainment prepared for him.

Kate, who, by experience, had learned to read her father's countenance, was thoroughly convinced that something had occurred at the levee in the morning to ruffle and worry him; but she never guessed the principal cause of his agitation; and Hanningham, who saw the propriety of keeping her in ignorance of the report of her husband's death, until it should be one way or another confirmed or contradicted, took the most prudent measure to prevent her enlightenment, by not mentioning the circumstance to his wife, knowing, as he did, that the next day would end their suspense, and apprehensive as he was, that female sympathy would induce his better half to let slip the information, vague as it was, in order, as he considered it, to gratify her friend by a piece of intelligence which he rather believed would be any thing but affecting to her.

The day passed on in a state of hurry, heat, and bustle, such as nobody, who has not seen a colonial city in a tropical climate, with a newly-landed governor in it, can possibly appreciate—the bullock-waggons creaking and rattling down to the beach, loaded with wine, for his majesty's service and the establishment of his Excellency, added a liveliness to the scene; and Lord Hillingdon proceeded, attended by all

the authorities, immediately after the levee to visit the cathedral, the curious chamber of Sculls, the Prado, the Portuguese Governor, and in short, all the curiosities of Funchal; after which, his excellency, mounted on a mule, (the tail of which was held by the muleteer during the course of his Excellency's journey,) ascended the hill by the Convent de Nuostra Senora del Monte to the beautiful quinta of his Excellency's excellent host, where a magnificent collation was prepared, with which the party amused themselves until it was time to return to town to dinner.

Meanwhile, the captain of his majesty's frigate had been busying himself in superintending the embarkation of wine and stores, and hurrying, as much as in him lay, the departure of the ship under his command; seeing that he was especially anxious to get upon the Indian station, of which his uncle happened to be naval commander-in-chief, and where, independently of increased allowances and certain freights of specie, he was desirous of enjoying the society of his said uncle's fair daughter Matilda, to whom it was generally supposed he would eventually be united.

Whatever occurs in this little world of ours, small or great, important or insignificant, woman is the *primum mobile* of all. This being a

subject which I intend, if I live, to illustrate more at length than I am able here to do, I shall not enlarge upon the important truth—but so it is, and to the potency of female influence was entirely attributable, in the present case, the frustration of certain hopes and expectations entertained by Hanningham and the two male Maxwells.

At about eight o'clock in the evening, the party assembled for dinner, and the heat and the splendour had never been exceeded in the island of Madeira. His Excellency laughed and joked, and drank wine, with all his surrounding friends; their names, which like their persons, were wholly unknown to his Excellency, having been previously written on a slip of paper, and placed at the side of his Excellency's plate; but Maxwell was far from the magnet of attraction, and Hanningham equally distant. The Portuguese authorities and the strangers had all the places of honour, and no opportunity occurred for the surgeon to edge in his word of inquiry during the prolonged banquet.

It was late when the master of the house considered it right and proper to rise and make a speech, which of course concluded with a proposal to drink the health of his Excellency the governor-general, and long life and happiness

to him. The noise which succeeded the announcement of this toast is inconceivable—the rattling and clattering of plates and spoons, and the infinity of *pas seuls* danced by the innumerable wine-glasses, were marvellous and astonishing, when amidst the clatter, his Excellency, flushed with pleasure, and glittering with the decorations of chivalry, arose, and spoke as follows:—

"Sir,—I have no hesitation in saying that this is the proudest moment of my life. To find myself surrounded by all the intelligence and respectability of such an important and enlightened community as the inhabitants of Madeira, is a gratification, sir, which no language of mine is adequate to express. When our feelings, sir, transcend the power of expression, it is unjust to those feelings to attempt to express them.—Sir and gentlemen, I do assure you I am most grateful to you all, for the very unexpected and unmerited honour you have done me, and I beg to drink all your very good healths in return."

This speech, novel in its construction, in the thoughts it contained, and in the language in which these thoughts were embodied, produced

more delight, and more rapture, and more noise; it was followed by the health of the governor, then those of the council, then that of the bishop, afterwards the collector of customs, then the tide-waiters, then the advocate-general, the master of the house, the captain of the frigate, the king of England, the king of Portugal, and a great variety of others. When, after a prodigious preparation of shouting, his Excellency rose, and again spake.

"Gentlemen," said his Excellency, "I have just been informed by my gallant friend, Captain Skysail, that he proposes sailing to-morrow morning. I have been entrusted to his care and guidance to the place of my destination, and I am too proud to obey his orders in every thing relating to the noble service of which he is so distinguished a member. I regret, however, the necessity which has urged him to the decision of quitting your hospitable shores so speedily; and I cannot take leave of you without once more expressing my grateful feelings for the great kindness and distinction with which I have been received amongst you.—Gentlemen, if I were to speak for hours, I could not say half what I feel in parting from you.—Gentlemen," (his Excellency here was very much affected,) "God bless you!"

This was the climax; the band struck up "God save the King—the whole company rose —Major O'Callagham gave his Excellency his Excellency's hat—Captain Guffinshaw handed his Excellency his Excellency's gloves, and his Excellency, leaning familiarly on the arm of Captain Skysail, proceeded to the drawing-room, where coffee was prepared, and the ladies were assembled.

In the midst of this galaxy of beauty, English and foreign, his Excellency stood, (his eye-glass at his eye,) bowing graciously and gracefully to every body and every thing round him. Kate, who was by no means anxious to put herself forward, was leaning on Mrs. Hanningham's arm, at the outside edge of the circle, when she caught his Excellency's notice.

"Who is that?" said his Excellency to the master of the house; "I know her face—eh!"

"Mrs. Apperton," said the master of the house; "she—"

"Oh, I know—eh—what—Maxwell's daughter?" said his Excellency; and advancing towards her, drew her forth from the brilliant crowd.

"Have you been long here?" said his Excellency.

"Some months, sir," said Katharine.

"Sweet island," said his Excellency—"charming people, eh?—fine climate—curious place, eh?—the bone-house—all built of heads and legs—what?"

"I have never seen it, sir," said Kate.

"Strange that," said his Excellency; "why not?"

"I believe because I had no curiosity," replied Mrs. Apperton.

"I call it the Scullery, eh," said his Excellency; "very odd place. Is Maxwell here?"

"Yes, sir," said Kate.

"I was very sorry to hear such bad accounts of him," said Lord Hillingdon; "very foolish, I believe, eh; nothing very wrong—only weak—great many people ruined last year, eh?"

"Confidence in one whom we esteem, sir," said Katherine, anxious at all times to vindicate her beloved father, "cannot surely be called folly."

"I don't know, I'm sure, do you?" said his Excellency. "Pray who is that tall lady, with the green feathers?"

"*I* don't know, sir," said Kate, whose eyes were half full of tears, caused first by the slur which his Excellency had cast upon her parent's conduct, and next by the frivolity with which

he glanced from a subject, to her of the most vital importance.

"Not know!" said his Excellency; "that 's very odd. If I lived here a week I should know everybody, and all their histories, and the histories of all their families, eh?—Pray what was the man's name who ruined your poor father?" added his Excellency, in a tone of affectionate consideration.

"Sir!" said Kate, trembling from head to foot.

"Some man, you know, who led him into all his scrapes," said Lord Hillingdon.

"It was," stammered the poor daughter of Maxwell; "it was—I don't know, I—it—"

"Oh, dear, dear, dear! I forgot," said Lord Hillingdon. "I hear so many things, and have so much to think of; it was his son-in-law. Ah—that—oh, your husband, by-the-bye—dear me. I beg pardon, Apple—ah, Apperton, yes, yes, I recollect, eh?—what? Well, I don't think you can lament his loss much, eh?"

"His loss, sir!" said Kate, astounded.

"No weeds, no weeping, eh?" said his Excellency; "not the fashion here, I suppose, what?"

"Weeds!" said Kate, more agitated.

"He 's dead, is not he, eh?" said his Excellency.

"Dead!" said Kate—and it was all she did say; the shock was too sudden to be borne, and wound up as her feelings had been by what appeared to her untutored mind a heartless combination of absurdities, the blow overcame her, and she fell back into the arms of her friend Mrs. Hanningham.

The confusion incidental to a *scene*, naturally followed. Maxwell ran to his daughter's assistance, Mrs. Hanningham led her out; Hanningham was in attendance upon his lady; and Edward, surprised at the bustle at the upper end of the room, no sooner heard the cause of it than he joined the retreating party, who reached home before poor Katharine was restored to a perfect consciousness of what she had heard, or what had happened.

Maxwell now determined to waive all ceremony upon a point so very important to his views and prospects, and resolved upon seeking his Excellency's presence before his departure, and endeavouring, if possible, to ascertain from him the grounds of his assertion, or rather of his supposition, that Apperton had shuffled off this mortal coil: and after soothing his child, and consigning her to the sisterly care of her friend Mrs. Hanningham, retired to rest, as-

suring himself that the next morning would relieve his doubts and uncertainty.

But we live a life of disappointments—at least they did, which is at present more to the purpose—and so it was to happen that neither could Hanningham avail himself of the surgeon's file of newspapers, nor Maxwell gain his much-looked-for audience of the governor-general; for Captain Skysail, who was what is called an uncommon smart officer, having suggested to his Excellency that *he* was going to sleep on board, that the moon shone bright, and the breeze was most refreshing, and that they should save several hours delay in the morning if he would return to the frigate too; his Excellency, whose accommodations on board were splendid, and who had not yet trained himself to the early hours of an Oriental life, and therefore did not exactly relish the idea of turning out by gun-fire the next day, immediately fell into the plan for repairing to the ship forthwith; and, accordingly, having taken leave of his host and his family, with every demonstration of politeness and gratitude, his Excellency embarked in Captain Skysail's barge, and was, before eight bells had been struck, snugly deposited in his cabin on board.

No sooner was it ascertained that his Excellency was gone, than the assistant adjutants-general were seen running about Funchal by the light of the moon, to find out the deputies adjutants-general, and the deputy-assistant assistant deputy commissaries general were flying in all directions to find out the assistant deputies commissaries general, in order to scramble on board how they could, and as fast as they could, the personal staff of his Excellency sticking as close to his Excellency's heels as a troop of chickens to the maternal hen.

Captain Skysail was too taut a hand to have any stragglers ashore—every soul, man and boy, was aboard by sunset, so no cause of delay existed amongst the nauticals; and when Maxwell, who slept in the uppermost floor of the house of Hanningham, Maxwell, & Co., put his venerable head out of a window which commanded the harbour of Funchal, his surprise was inconceivably great when he found no vestige of his majesty's frigate visible. If he *had* seen her, his proficiency in the art of Nauscopy would have beaten that of M. Bottineau himself; for the noble vessel was, at the period of his observation, some forty miles from the hospitable island of Madeira.

CHAPTER III.

"Shall I ne'er bask in her eye-shine again,
Nor view the love that played in those dear beams,
And shot me with a thousand thousand smiles?"

LEE.

THE vexation and disappointment of the parties so deeply interested in the rumour which had reached them of Apperton's death, when they found the frigate gone, and the means of confirming the intelligence one way or the other, consequently taken from them, may easily be conceived. There was, however, no remedy for it; and it would have been wholly inconsistent with Hanningham's plans to wait until the real facts concerning Apperton could be ascertained.

Under existing circumstances, as thè diplomatists have it, Maxwell and his daughter felt an inclination to accompany the Hanninghams to England; for although the voyage would be

doubled in extent, and more than doubled in duration, by the *detour* to Fayal, still the society of friends and other circumstances, the importance of which Maxwell seemed more fully to appreciate than Katharine, decided them at least to discuss seriously the project of joining the party,

To Edward, the new arrangement of their going, was not quite so agreeable as the old one of staying; for although Funchal is a very agreeable place, and the country round it beautiful, still to be left in a huge rambling house, without any associate, and with nothing to console him but the recollections of his lost Maria, were not the most pleasing anticipations in the world. However, he had embarked in the business, and he must take his turn in the annoyances: he would next spring visit England himself, and perhaps by that time the mystery about his unknown fair one would be cleared up. In this hope he certainly was encouraged by a change, trifling enough it must be confessed, in the tone of his father's later conversations on the point; and he clung to that change with an earnestness and anxiety, which those who are unable to appreciate warmth of feeling, might be pleased to consider romantic and even foolish.

One thing struck Edward and Katherine as strange in their parent's conduct at this crisis: hating as he did the sea, and having vehemently expressed his disinclination to increase the length of the voyage homewards by a *trajet* to Fayal, he suddenly appeared to admit the plausibility of his friend Hanningham's representations with regard to certain advantages likely to accrue from their undertaking the expedition together; and all at once, as it were, expressed an anxiety to visit an island of which few people know much, and of which it is most probable Maxwell himself knew nothing.

This alteration in his views and remarks upon the undertaking, his son and daughter attributed to his belief in the report of Apperton's death, and an anxiety to avail himself of the assistance and advice of Hanningham, when they should arrive in England; and they attributed his silence as to the real motive which had induced him to alter his original determination in this respect, to a delicacy and desire not to agitate his daughter's feelings, by a reference to an event which, however little it might excite her grief, must at all events deeply interest some other of her feelings.

It was quite evident to Edward, who from his

position in the house, was of course fully aware of all its mercantile transactions, that the agency of Mr. Wilson at Fayal, as far as it concerned their trade or speculations, was of infinitely small importance; because during the whole period of his partnership—which to be sure was not a very considerable one—not a single communication had been received from the island in which his branch of the house was established; nor could he at any time ascertain from Hanningham the nature or character of *their* Mr. Wilson's operations there. If he ventured to ask, he was quieted by an assurance that he would know in time, and that it was a matter of great interest to them, to keep the affair perfectly quiet and private; and under these circumstances, and seeing that there are secrets in all families, Mr. Maxwell, jun. continued his avocations at Funchal, without very much troubling his head with what was going on at Villa da Horta.

As the period of the departure of the party approached, the elder Maxwell became constantly agitated and uneasy. This, his kind and attentive children and friends attributed to the anxiety which a man at his time of life must, under his circumstances, feel at the prospect of

a return to his native country beggared, and, for all he knew, robbed of his good name, and made poor indeed, by the misrepresentations of those to whose knavery or folly he had fallen a victim. But Kate thought she saw something beyond selfishness in the emotions which her parent displayed. What might be the cause she did not presume to surmise; nor did she permit herself to encourage the suspicion which she entertained, that the voyage to Fayal was somehow connected with the subject upon which she was pledged to her father never to speak.

To her, who had connected this vital secret with another almost equally serious matter, at least as far as her brother was concerned, this voyage had therefore become important and interesting; although she had but slender grounds for imagining that her father's fixed determination and stern decision about the beautiful vision, was in any degree mixed up with the persons or events involved in the discovery she had made.

It was unfortunate for Kate, that when she had unintentionally become acquainted with so much of the secret which was evidently of such importance to her father, as her eyes could put

her in possession of, the old gentleman had, in the height of his agitation, actually explained so much more as to put himself completely in his daughter's power. If he had, as the colloquial phrase goes, kept his own council and said nothing, what was exhibited to the sight of Katharine would neither have illuminated her, nor committed her parent. As it was, this probably unintentional communicativeness, which rendered her the depository of the mystery, kept her father in a constant state of anxiety, lest she should disclose the facts connected with the scene, and kept her in equal apprehension lest any body else should find them out.

"Kate," said Maxwell, "on the day previous to their embarkation for Fayal, "I am going to speak to you on a subject—on the subject, I should rather say, which has been so long interdicted in our conversations."

"Let me intreat you, sir," said Mrs. Apperton, "do not add to the weight upon my mind, by making any new confidence. I am sure I have bitterly repented, ever since, the rashness which made me acquainted with what I already know."

"Circumstances," said Maxwell, "not any communication of mine, must shortly give you

fresh information upon that point; and since, perhaps, we may have few opportunities of speaking together alone on board the vessel, I thought it prudent and proper to put you on your guard, and prepare you for what you may see when we arrive at Fayal."

"I comprehend, sir," said Kate; "and have you known, that the individual whom we are there to see, was—"

"Hush! hush!" said Maxwell, interrupting her; "never more let the sound of that name escape your lips. I only knew the fact, when our good friend here became most urgent that we should accompany him with his wife on their voyage. The rumours respecting Apperton have made me anxious to visit England; but it must be done with caution, and, in the first instance, under an assumed name. This could not have been well arranged without something like confederacy; for, unless I had an active and intelligent person at liberty to make inquiries, and ascertain the real state of affairs, while I lay concealed, my object could not be attained. This it was, that made me anxious to avail myself of our kind friend's aid and presence. Hating a protracted navigation, I therefore strongly urged the uselessness of a visit to his agent at

Fayal, which will, we know, double the distance, and in all probability more than double the duration of our voyage. It was then, and then only, that I ascertained what I had before suspected; but so strongly was our friend bound by feeling, and the injunctions he had received, that it was only when I announced my determination to abandon all idea of returning to England, in consequence of his resolution to extend the voyage, that he told me the truth; and when he did, it was with regret, because, in addition to the feelings so natural to his kind heart, he had anticipated the pleasure of surprising one, whom he is pleased to consider his greatest benefactor."

"And I shall again see that person?" said Kate; "with what different feelings!—the kindness we have experienced here will never be forgotten by me; and I shall with gratitude receive and cherish any one, who is naturally so—"

"Stay, stay, Kate!" said Maxwell; "we are interrupted—now, not a syllable to Edward upon this matter; he knows nothing from you of what you knew before, and therefore cannot be interested in the present part of the affair."

"I can safely aver that he does not," said

Kate; who thought the assertion of her father sounded very much like a question.

"My feelings with regard to *him*," said the surgeon, "are of the most painful nature. I am sure, quite sure, that his romantic attachment is preying upon his spirits, and bearing him down; if I could explain the real circumstances of that case, you—you would indeed be surprised; but—"

"I can almost surmise," said Mrs. Apperton, "but it seems too improbable."

"Not another word, Kate," said her father; "you will soon have an opportunity of judging more clearly on the subject; but remember, not a syllable to my poor boy, whose anguish could only be increased by increased knowledge on the subject."

"Am I right in my suspicions?" said Kate.

Maxwell hesitated.

"Surely you may trust me with *all*," said she.

Maxwell looked sceptical: he knew her affection for her brother.

"It is useless to say any thing on the subject," said Maxwell, after a moment's pause: "what you may surmise or guess, I know not; but it would be worse than cruel to speak on

the subject to Edward; for any favourable result to the extraordinary attachment he has formed—is impossible!"

"Father," said Kate, "whether I am right, or whether I am wrong in my supposition, I know not; but, oh! do recollect how much happiness—how many hearts have been sacrificed to prejudice; and—"

"Prejudice!" repeated Maxwell—"yes—but in *this* case—"

"Then I *am* right," exclaimed Katharine.

"I do not admit that," replied her father; "but if you were, I think you will admit, that it would be impossible to conquer one's feelings on these points."

"That depends upon circumstances," said Kate: "supposing the kind hostess of the house in which we have been so kindly received here, had objected to marry the lord of her choice, and secure the husband whom she adores, because he is the son of a convicted murderer?"

"It might have been weak and idle," said Maxwell; "but it is not a case in point, because, unfortunately for your argument, Kate, they were married before the horrid catastrophe occurred."

"And would you have destroyed the happi-

ness of your child," said Kate, "supposing an attachment to have existed between her and the son of Hanningham, even if the crime of which he was convicted, had been committed, after its existence was known to you?"

"Kate," said her father, "do not urge me on such a point: every word you utter gives me an additional pang. Heaven knows, I have already sacrificed too much to prejudice——"

"——To risk a repetition, my dear father," said Kate, "of the sorrows your delicacy of feeling has unintentionally caused. If I am right in my guess about Edward—"

"Keep your suspicions to yourself," said Maxwell, "and give me time to consider the subject dispassionately; but let me implore you, not a word to *him*. I should not have touched upon any subject connected with these matters; but, as I have already said, I was anxious to guard you from any violent surprise on your arrival at Fayal, where as much caution is to be observed, as here, or anywhere else."

The conversation was here terminated by the arrival of company, and Kate felt now nearly convinced, that notwithstanding the romantic

improbability of the circumstances, she was not altogether deceived in her suppositions concerning her brother's attachment to the visionary beauty.

It was singular enough, that the conversation had scarcely ended, when Edward, wholly unaware of its nature, turning towards his sister, began a discussion as to his feelings with regard to Maria, and a disquisition into the course which he ought to pursue with regard to her, on the eve of his father's departure for England. The embarrassment in which Katharine found herself thus unexpectedly involved, was excessive. The delicacy with which she was constrained to treat the subject upon which she felt assured she was perfectly well informed, and the difficulty of denying any knowledge of the real state of the case without committing herself, either to her father or Edward, was such as a mind naturally addicted to truth and candour, could scarcely manage.

"You recollect, Kate," said Edward, "that one day at Brighton you expressed your belief that you had discovered who that dear inexplicable creature is; surely I have suffered a sufficiently long period of probation; tell me

what you meant. The crisis is at hand, for with to-morrow, vanish all my hopes of hearing of her again."

"You must forgive me, my dear brother," replied Mrs. Apperton, "if I maintain the same silence as I have hitherto observed upon the subject. It is true, your father leaves you, but his departure by no means adds to the difficulties which interpose between your hopes and their completion."

"You, then, really know who she is?" said Edward.

"Indeed I do not," answered his sister; "I have my suspicions, and to-day, for the first time, have mentioned them to my father; but I can get nothing like a decisive and satisfactory answer."

"To-day, Kate," said her brother.

"To-day," replied Kate. "I have ventured this very hour to plead your cause, to endeavour to show my dear father the danger and ill success too, of trifling with genuine feeling, and separating two congenial hearts, for the sake of some prejudice."

"If I could speak to my father," said Edward.

"I should advise you to leave things as they

are," said Kate; "circumstances may arise—at least, if the case is as I suppose it to be—which may facilitate the business; for of this I am quite sure, if I am right in my conjecture, what has happened during the last few months must have made a considerable alteration in the nature of the affair."

"That is to say," said Edward, "misfortune on one hand, and villany on the other, having reduced me from the station which I then held, to one of a lower degree, I may now, without injury to the dignity of my family, admit the pretensions of this lovely girl to share my decreased fortune, and my deteriorated character."

"Depend upon it you are wrong," said Kate. "If the young lady be the person I suppose—and if she possess sense and feeling, likely to ensure your happiness in life, she will feel no disinclination to become the wife of an English merchant. I repeat to you, I *know* nothing, except, that your only course is silence on the subject, and patience for the developement of events: there is much yet to be known—much to be discovered—much to be undergone, and much to be overcome; but this, I tell you, a premature and hasty measure at this crisis, would perhaps ruin all your hopes."

"Hopes, Katharine!" said Edward, "have I hopes?"

"Ask me no more," said Mrs. Apperton; "but if you believe in my affection—if you have faith in my judgment, let my father go to England unquestioned by you; I shall be near him through the voyage: he feels more bitterly than I can bear to see, the sacrifice he has already made of *my* happiness, and gazes with regret on the wreck of all his hopes; rely, then, upon my good offices, and live upon this declaration—that the case is not altogether hopeless."

"I must of course submit myself to the dictates of my counsel," said Edward; "I retain you then—be eloquent in my cause, obtain me a verdict, and my gratitude will be unbounded, as my affection is devoted to you. As for Apperton, Kate, perhaps he will now insist upon your remaining with him in England."

"Oh, Edward!" said Kate; "how am I to act towards that man, if he yet lives? am I liable to be compelled to stay with him—the destroyer of my happiness—the betrayer of my poor father?"

"And, worse than all," said Edward, half

maliciously, "the brother-in-law of the Biddles."

"His connexions I care little about," said Kate; "I cannot be forced into any association with *them*; but when I recollect all the circumstances of the case—when I recollect the deception he has practised—the heartless cruelty to my father, and above all——"

"—— That Charles Somerford is alive, and in England, Kate," said Edward.

"I admit, Edward," said Mrs. Apperton, "that the return of Charles at the crisis when it occurred, adds to the severity of my trial; but I know my duty, and shall do it. I have no fear of swerving from the path which religion and morality prescribe for me; and I declare, that if, having chosen Apperton, he had maintained honestly the character which I thought him to possess, when I accepted his offer; if he had not so early thrown off the mask, and developed his baseness and selfishness, added to that, which women most of all abhor, meanness of spirit, I would have been his affectionate, faithful wife throughout my existence, and have fulfilled every duty with the strictest punctuality and care; but as it is, were Somerford away —dead, and no contrast constantly placed be-

fore my eyes, I could not have endured the man to whom I am so unhappily united. No, Edward, there must be grounds sufficient, if not in law, at least in justice and reason, why I should separate from one who has conducted himself as he has done."

"You will find it a difficult case if he insists upon your remaining with him," said Edward; "he has been unfortunate—he has gambled deeply—he has lost; his manners are uncourteous, his selfishness evident, and his great design in his connexion with you made clear to *us;* but still you are his wife, and may not quit him for any of these causes. If every wife were able to part from her husband upon similar grounds, the number of single gentlemen would be prodigiously increased within the bills of mortality."

"That event must be looked to, when the time arrives," said Kate; "at present we have other things to occupy our minds. My father endeavours at an arrangement with his creditors, and ascertaining the amount of his involvements, for no man knows less of his affairs than he does at this moment. Such implicit confidence surely never was reposed by one man in another's honour as that which my father placed in Apperton.

I am quite happy that our excellent friend Hanningham is going to England—he is an active and intelligent man of business, and may perhaps relieve our minds from the dreadful suspense in which we exist."

"The consequence of which will be," said Edward, "that I shall never see you here again, but be left, like another Robinson Crusoe, on the desert island; for when you and the Hanninghams are gone, desert it will be to me."

"But with Maria?" said Catherine.

"It would be paradise!" exclaimed Edward.

"Who knows," said Mrs. Apperton, "but your friends may become acquainted with her in England, and bring her back to bless your hopes and wishes."

"Impossible, I fear," said Edward;—"however, as I am compelled to wait, I must lay in a fresh stock of patience, apply myself to business, and endeavour to occupy my mind with busier matters than love, and the bright dream of bliss which once filled my mind."

"—When Jane Epworth was the object," said Kate.

"Jane Epworth never *was* the object," replied Edward; "and amongst all our misfortunes, it is some comfort to reflect upon that

escape. To have been sacrificed for her fortune——"

"Which," interrupted Catherine, "would in all probability have been sacrificed in the general wreck."

"Aye, indeed," cried Edward, "most probably—any way then that was an escape."

"And even *that*," said Kate, "would have been a princely match compared with a connexion with your beautiful Maria."

"Impossible," exclaimed Edward—"so angelic a creature as that!"

"Come, come," said Mrs. Apperton, "no raptures. I repeat to you, the difficulties in your way would in most cases be insurmountable. Trust to me, and if I am right in my views, I think much may be done in the way of soothing angry feeelings, and overcoming alarming difficulties; but you must be patient, and above all things quiet."

"No fisherman," said Edward, "can be found more patient, no fish more mute than I—and—"

"Then now begin your probation," said Kate, "for here is company."

As the elder Maxwell entered the room, he cast a glance at his children, which spoke volumes. There were strangers present, and he could say

nothing; but he felt assured that Katharine had in some degree betrayed the confidence he had reposed in her, if confidence that could be called which amounted to little else than a regular admisssion that her suspicions with regard to the incognita had some foundation. The storm which gathered on his brow was not soon to be allayed, and as usual whenever he suspected the subject which he appeared to dread so much, had been discussed or even remotely alluded to by his daughter, he appeared perfectly absorbed in his own reflections during the whole of the dinner, which almost immediately succeeded his entrance into the drawing-room; and no sooner was the repast over, and he could decently quit the party, than he sought and found Katharine, whose assertion of her innocence appeared to have less weight with him than usual. He knew how much she could tell, and of how much importance it was for Edward to know that much, and he repented bitterly that thus, a second time, he had gratuitously and needlessly made her a confidante. His cross-examination of Edward, who really knew nothing, and moreover appeared not to have the slightest suspicion of any of the facts of the case, set his mind at rest; and

when he rejoined the party with his children, his manners resumed their suavity, and his conversation that liveliness which even his misfortunes had not been powerful enough to destroy.

Upon Edward, however, the approaching separation of the following day had a considerable effect. He had in fact never been parted from his family; and although he was, as he could not fail to be, extremely popular in the place which he inhabited, he felt, that when his father and sister were gone, he should have nobody to refer to—nobody to consult—nobody to speak to in the way in which dear and near relations can alone converse, when some common interest binds them, and when habitual intercourse has so united the taste and feeling, that a sympathy is ensured, which, amongst strangers or ordinary acquaintance, cannot be expected to exist. However, considering what the wreck of his hopes and expectations had been, he had no right to complain, but still the very responsibility of situation, which would naturally devolve upon him so soon as his colleague in business should depart, added in some degree to the embarrassment of his position.

The morning arrived which was to divide the united family. Hanningham and Edward

Maxwell passed the early part of the day arranging papers and balancing accounts. There were large consignments to be made to Calcutta, Madras, Ceylon, and even New South Wales, all under the care and inspection of Edward; bills of exchange to be drawn, entries to be made, letters to be written. There was scarcely any part of the habitable globe in which business was not to be done, or for which shipments were not to be effected; but throughout the whole morning, Hanningham made no mention about Mr. Wilson, the agent at Fayal. It was natural perhaps that he should not mention an agent at so small and insignificant a place, and it seemed very unnatural that such a house should have such a person at such a place; but as he felt the agency to be of such importance that he had actually freighted a vessel himself to take the unusual course which he desired to take, and as he was about to double the distance to England, and, as has already been shown, more than double the length of the voyage, by visiting Fayal, it seemed stranger than his doing all this, that he did not make some observation to his partner, upon the main object of his pursuit in going thither. Maxwell could not understand it, nor

could he let the subject pass away without once more evincing what he considered a proper and just regard for the firm, by specially inquiring what was to be done with the Fayal agency, and whether he was to expect any consignments from Villa da Horta, or to make any to that place.

"Maxwell," said Hanningham, "I am not surprised at your question; it shows better than mere curiosity, it exhibits a proper solicitude for the concern in which we are engaged. Partners in trade ought to have no secrets, but I admit I have one; and the agency at Fayal involves it. You will have no consignments from that island, nor do I wish you should. You will have no consignment to make thither, for I take thither two pipes of "London Particular" myself—the accounts of that agency are peculiarly my care, and strictly private."

"My dear Hanningham," said Maxwell, "say not another word. I only mentioned the thing as a matter of business—of course make your arrangements; I can have nothing to do with it. I merely inquired because I thought you might have some order to give which had escaped your memory."

"No, no," said Hanningham, "it scarcely is possible that any thing connected with that con-

cern should escape my memory. When we return I shall perhaps have less difficulty in explaining the state of the case; at present you may trust me, that nothing which is going on in that island shall ever interfere with the character and respectability of our firm here."

It was clear that the speculation, however unimportant the scene of its operation, was one of no trifling nature; and Maxwell, who naturally bowed to the superior skill and judgment of the senior partner, felt perfectly satisfied of the activity and integrity of Hanningham. If he had known all that related to the proceedings to which Hanningham alluded, he might indeed have felt some difficulty—but that was not to be.

To Katharine the having her affectionate friend Mrs. Hanningham with her, was a great relief; and, besides the whole arrangement of the vessel and the attendants for the voyage were so different from those under which she suffered during the passage out, that it appeared by comparison a party of pleasure. The vessel was an English brig, American-built, with ample accommodation, an intelligent captain, a smart crew, comfortable cabins, and excellent stock: the wind was fair, she rode at a single anchor, and before

the voyagers there were hopes, expectations, and anticipations of the most exciting nature; and as to separation, seeing that one only was to be left behind, and four to go, if the grief at parting was equitably divided, Edward himself bore four times as much of the sufferings as either of the individuals who quitted him.

Mrs. Hanningham, who had never been in London, having been married from the country, looked forward to her visit to the metropolis, and after that to her family, with the most agreeable anxiety; Maxwell was all tremor and trepidation until he ascertained the state of his affairs at home; Katharine was all solicitude until she discovered the truth or falsehood of the reports concerning Apperton's death; and Hanningham, who appeared, if possible, more deeply interested than any of the party, was dying of impatience until he saw the agent who was established at Fayal.

At twelve o'clock the party embarked on board the good brig Rover, and after they had taken an affectionate leave of Maxwell, the yards were squared, and away she went. Edward watched her intently until she became an indistinct speck on the horizon, and having performed this last sad duty to his departing

connexions and friends, returned to the large and lonesome house of which he now remained the absolute master and possessor.

It was dull work for him, and he felt more desolate than he ever yet had felt in his life; he walked out, paced the prado, inhaled the fragrance of the flowering trees with which it is lined, strolled again to the sea, and at last accepted an invitation to supper with a brother merchant, who, anticipating the dullness he must naturally feel immediately after losing his friends, had hunted him out for the purpose of bidding him to his hospitable board.

It seems wicked to leave the poor young man in this state, but the attention of the reader is wanted elsewhere; and as events are likely to accumulate at this period of our history, we must follow the example of the Maxwells and Hanninghams, and for the present quit the beautiful and salubrious island of Madeira.

CHAPTER IV.

——"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."
SHAKSPEARE.

WHILE the literature of the present day possesses so many powerful artists in the nautical school, and when Tales of the Sea of the best sort abound, it would be idle for a landsman, who has scarcely dipped his wings in the ocean, to attempt a detail of the eccentric voyage undertaken by Maxwell and his daughter and Hanningham and his wife. There was evidently some important object to gain by their peculiar, and by no means agreeable deviation from the ordinary routine of voyages; and while they are living upon hopes, whatever their nature may be, and

looking forward to something, whatever it is, I shall endeavour to recall the attention of the reader to Major Charles Somerford and the Lady Emily Denham, who, whatever the said reader may think, appear to have brought themselves, or to have been brought, into a situation of some difficulty and much delicacy.

A London belle, who, during the season, every night in the week, (Sundays not excepted,) flutters through the round—some call it gay—of society, indulges at times in harmless flirtations, ventures to be extremely kind and smiling to some devoted swain, plays herself off for the evening, and then lays aside her feelings towards him, and even her recollection of him, with her *Boa*, and would as willingly consign the dandy as the tippet to the *surveillance* and keeping of her maid. The repetition of this sort of display increases perhaps the reputation of the young lady for heart-killing, but it proportionably diminishes the naturalness and sensibility of her own character. She becomes almost an actress in the scene around her, and, like an actress, learns to ridicule the best feelings of our hearts, and sneer at the best sentiments of our nature. Yet there *are* moments in the midst of all the glare of light, the fra-

grance of flowers, the crash of music to the bounding of feet, when even *she* feels; but when she does, she is acted upon by the recollection of other and different scenes and circumstances—by the remembrance of hours differently spent, and a recurrence to pursuits more congenial to her heart and mind, than the brilliant, boisterous tumult which surrounds her.

There are, indeed, those who affect to despise every thing like nature, and who pass their days in the country precisely as they pass their time in London; and who, like Lady Townly in the play, laugh at rurality, and shudder at the notion of an old tree. But this *is* affectation—they know better, and their feelings and tastes are better; but, living in awe of ridicule, this scorn of every thing divested of art is only a practical illustration of the whole scheme of artificiality. Lady Emily Denham was one of those few persons who venture to think for themselves—she was quiet, retiring, and unassuming; she was told it was necessary to undergo a certain probation in the fashionable world, and that the noviciate must be performed; and so she underwent it. But shame to her taste be it said, she did not like the gaiety

with which she was surrounded; and, perhaps, acted upon, by the delicacy of her constitution, shrank from the hurly-burly of society, and gladly subsided into the quietude of her grandfather's temporary residence at Cheltenham.

There are circumstances in the world which fall out most extraordinarily, or, as Godfrey Moss would have said, "*curos coincidences*, sir;" and one of those was the coincidence of Major Somerford's arrival at Cheltenham, and introduction to Lady Emily's retirement, just at the moment that she had dropped, as it were, from the Eldorado Mountains of Almack's into the "peaceful vale" of Lord Lessingham's villa.

I should insult the perceptive faculties of my reader, were I to dilate, for a moment, upon the peculiar effect of juxta-position in a country house. In London, people meet, and talk, and flirt, and dance, order their carriages, and go home; they meet again perhaps to-morrow, perhaps not, although London society runs a good deal in what are conventionally, perhaps correctly, called *Clicks*. But they meet, dressed out in the trickeries of the world, upon the *qui vive* for gaiety, and eager for display. In all general assemblies, the love of ridiculing every body not immediately belonging to ourselves,

excites a spirit of conversation which may evince the quality of the mind, but with which the heart has nothing to do. It is all flutter, and restlessness, and envy, and jealousy; and so as the point is made to please the ear, the friend who is beyond the reach of *words* must be content to be sacrificed upon the altar of her who listens. The *revanche*, however, is easy, and most generally played off. And thus, if all that is said in an assembly could be said in detail, so that every body present should hear it, the only question that would arise, would be, When will this party meet again?

But in the country—oh! those places to look at—the drives in the neighbourhood—the excursions—the wet mornings in the house—the music—the writing out *this*, and the reading out *that*, and the constant lingerings and loitering, and the social evenings, and the harp, and the chess, and the *ecarté*, and all the other things contrived for people in pairs. Living in a country house bears the same relation to living in London, that sitting down to dinner does to sitting down to supper—a round table that will scarcely hold twelve people at dinner, will conveniently accommodate eighteen at

supper—the reason appearing the same as that which one can give for the more social manners of a country house compared with those of town. Habit and association make people more natural. The most consummate coxcomb living cannot always play the game; he *must* relax, and sooner or later does, if you keep him always in view. Let him once out of your sight, and he takes in a new stock of affectation to begin again. The fresh and somewhat humid air of the country takes the starch out of stiff people, and some influence, perhaps as genial, operates in a similar way upon them, later in the evening. Moore might be quoted advantageously here; his "Fly not yet," expresses it all: but I must not dwell too long on a dissertation which has only for its object to show how very important the arrival of Major Somerford at Lord Lessingham's, actually was; happening as it did at the precise juncture of time, at which Lady Emily had retired from the gaieties of London.

The worst of these country affairs is, that without meaning any thing in the outset, they are sure to come to something in the end; a difficulty to which London matters are not so subject: and certain it is, that although Somerford was a

remarkably good-looking person, with most agreeable manners, and moreover highly accomplished, he might, with all that, have squeezed into rooms, and flourished round them in a waltz, or scuffled across them in a gallope every night, during a long season in town, and Lady Emily would never have seen, or perhaps if seen, never have noticed, or if ever noticed, never have remembered him for an hour; but at Lord Lessingham's, her mind, attuned to sentiment by illness, her heart naturally kind and affectionate, gratified by the deference and attention of her father's guest, she felt an immediate prepossession for Charles, whose manner, subdued by his own anxiety concerning Katharine, was gentler than perhaps it would otherwise have been, and gave an idea of depth of feeling very justly as to the fact, but sadly erroneous as to the object by which it was excited.

In short, the rural system which I have endeavoured faintly to sketch, was in full play at Lord Lessingham's; and Lady Emily, wholly unconscious of the existence of Somerford's first love, became seriously and deeply attached to him, without being in the slightest degree conscious of the fact. She felt, however, sensible

that there was a sort of coldness and shyness in his manner towards her when they were together alone, which did not indicate a reciprocity of feeling; but this she attributed to the diffidence of a young man, who naturally must think that his engaging the affections of so near a relative of such a person as Lord Lessingham, was but an ungracious repayment of the kindness and condescension which had been shown him by his lordship during the period of their acquaintance.

A few days only had elapsed after the occurrence of the very embarrassing *scene* with which this volume opens, when Lord Lessingham recurred to the subject of Charles's intimacy in his family, in a manner which indicated the depth of interest with which he regarded the circumstances connected with it.

"Somerford," said his lordship, "I am aware of the embarrassment under which you labour while in the society of my excellent Emily. I know too much of the world, and am too quick an observer of the workings of human nature, not to be perfectly conscious of the change which has taken place in your manner within these few days. I admit it to be natural,

and I regard the alteration as a proof of your solicitude for the happiness of persons who feel the sincerest interest for you."

"I am not aware——" said Somerford—

"Yes, Charles, you are," interrupted his lordship. "I speak to you in confidence, and I appeal to the best feelings of your nature: you feel a growing affection for Emily—you are conscious that persons in my station in society expect, in a marriage for their children—and I consider Emily exactly as if she were my own daughter—certain essentials, as they are considered, which it has not pleased fortune to bestow upon you; you therefore honourably check your natural impulse to admire my child, and with a chivalrous resolution, endeavour to break the bonds which you find closing round you."

"I trust, my lord," said Somerford, "that be my feelings what they may, I shall never prove unworthy of the confidence you have reposed in me, nor repay such goodness as I have received at your lordship's hands, by alienating the affections of a beloved relation from those who have a right to claim them."

"I know your motive, sir," said his lordship, (which by the bye he did not,) "I appreciate your conduct; but I shall be candid with

you, and tell you that *I* feel very differently, upon matters in which the heart is concerned, from many of my contemporaries and connexions. To force the inclinations of a young woman, and bid her drive from her heart and mind, an object to whom she is devotedly attached, is to command a being we love to be miserable for life. It may be said, that there *are* cases where such interference and such decision may be necessary to save a thoughtless girl from endless wretchedness, which might attend her marriage with some base and unworthy individual; and so it is, where the mind and character and principles are light, uncultivated, and ill-regulated; but in a case like Emily's, no such necessity for coercion exists; a being like her, can never be won by that, which is not itself estimable and amiable."

Somerford, who felt that the conversation was taking not only a very important, but unexpected turn, was conscious of blushing—a failing not much in fashion in these days.

"Emily," said Lord Lessingham, "has seen the gaiety of a London season, at least the greater part of one; she retires from that gaiety to the quietude and seclusion of this retreat; she becomes acquainted with an estimable, ami-

able man, and—why should I conceal it from you?—she gives him her heart."

"Yes, my lord," said Somerford, trembling at the case which his lordship was putting hypothetically.

"Can *you* blame her?" said his lordship, "I cannot; for if blame is attachable any where, it is to him who is her guardian and protector. If he had considered a serious termination to their acquaintance not desirable, he should have checked the intimacy which he must have seen increasing, and separated those who were gradually growing more essential to each other's happiness."

Somerford tried to speak, but Lord Lessingham continued.

"Placed as you are in the world," said his lordship, "a soldier of fortune—which means, in fact, of no fortune—I can easily enter into those feelings, the workings of which, I have attentively watched, since Emily, who has confided to me the history of your late interview with her, had perhaps inadvertently betrayed the real state of her heart. It is my joyous task, Somerford, to relieve the embarrassment you feel, and release your affections from the thraldom to which you think them doomed, and to tell you that I place

my grandchild's happiness beyond all other considerations, and accept you as her suitor with pride and pleasure."

To describe Somerford's feelings at this extraordinary declaration of Lord Lessingham's views and intentions, would be impossible—to be conscious that he was loaded with his lordship's praise for sacrificing his affection for Lady Emily to a sense of honour and delicacy, when in fact it was to duty and love for another; and to find himself offered beauty, wealth, rank, accomplishments, excellence of temper, fascination of manners, all his own; and with nothing to bring forward in opposition to these, but hopeless love for the daughter of a man in middling life, ruined in circumstances, and an exile from his country; that daughter having broken her faith to *him*, and married a rival in all respects his inferior.—What a situation!

But add to this, a more enchaining claim upon his heart. He knew that he was beloved by the fascinating creature whom he might now possess—the fact of her attachment formed the very basis of the present negociation—what a conflict of passion and feeling did this combination of circumstances raise in his heart and mind!

As for Lord Lessingham, who, instead of seeing his young friend start from his seat, burst into an ecstasy, and pour forth a torrent of gratitude, delight, rapture, and exultation, saw him fixed like a statue, pale and trembling with agitation; he scarcely believed the evidence of his own senses.

"My lord," said Somerford, after a pause, and so soon as he could give utterance to words, "if I permitted myself to accept the praise which your lordship has been pleased to bestow upon my feelings and conduct towards Lady Emily, I should be the basest of human beings. I take no credit for any of the delicacy for which you so much extol me. I admit, that I did perceive—for mercy's sake do not attribute what I say to vanity—I did perceive that Lady Emily—felt—a prepossession in my favour—I saw too the impropriety, the infamy on my part, of encouraging that prepossession; and it was my intention, after gradually diminishing the length of my visits here, to have withdrawn myself altogether; a course I considered more expedient for many reasons, than that of hastily and decidedly breaking off our connexion. Amongst those reasons, was a desire not to excite in your lordship's mind an idea that I

you should consider the nature of the engagement, to which you voluntarily pledge yourself. The lady is the wife of another man—which man she married while you considered her under an engagement to *you*—is this not the case?"

"It certainly is, my lord," said Somerford, "and you will no doubt consider it weak in me to nurture a passion, which circumstances have rendered perhaps hopeless."

"Less weak than wicked, in my mind," said Lord Lessingham, "is an engagement of such a nature. The anxiety necessarily implied for the death of another human being, whom the fickleness of the lady herself has interposed between you and what you consider your happiness, seems to me to be wholly incompatible with the feelings you have so uniformly expressed on all other subjects, and your possession of which, has been accounted by me of greater value than worldly fortune—however, every man judges for himself."

"Let me pray your lordship not to decide harshly against her," said Charles; "the lady with whose history and circumstances you seem acquainted, was the playmate of my youth, my friend, my first, my only love—her accept-

ance of her present husband was procured by misrepresentation, and her fidelity was assailed by allegations made against mine."

"Exactly so," said Lord Lessingham; "made by her father, who had fallen into ruin, by connecting himself in gambling speculations with the man to whom he has sacrificed his child. At all events, they are married, and you resign a certainty of happiness with an exemplary lady, who is devoted to you, and who—forgive me for saying so much, upon a subject on which I generally say so little—would, without disparagement to your respectability, place you in a sphere of life which could not fail to be desirable to you. Emily is my heiress; to *her* descends not only my fortune but my title—from her it devolves upon her eldest son, if she have a family: these are advantages which in a worldly point of view might——"

"Oh, my lord," interrupted Charles, "I know your heart and feelings too well, to think for a moment that you appreciate worldly advantages more highly than feelings of honour and rectitude; and I am sure that you know enough of me to know that I am not likely to be swayed by those advantages, in a decision on such a subject as this. For herself alone,

untitled and undowered, I should adore Lady Emily; her happiness would be the sole object of my existence, and I should never have been sufficiently grateful for her kindness—but, my lord, I stand pledged—"

—"To a married woman, Mr. Somerford," said his lordship, "who, as I have already said, is married, because under the delusions practised by her respectable parent, she has played you false. Think of this again, and ask your proud heart whether the treatment you have received at Maxwell's hands throughout your life, is such as to render an intimate connexion with his family so very desirable. His pride, Major Somerford, tore you from his daughter when *he* was affluent and prosperous, and *you* were poor and friendless—he banished you, to avoid the connexion—he deluded his child into forgetting you. You return—he is ruined—and now he seeks to renew an acquaintance with the thriving Major Somerford, that he disdained to continue with the friendless ensign, the son of his ancient friend and associate."

"My lord," said Somerford, "where have you, thus, become acquainted with the particulars of my early life and connexion with Mr. Maxwell?"

"From an authentic source," said his lordship; "and although the kindness of the family was evinced towards your mother on her death-bed, you, perhaps, were too young to feel the neglects and insults she suffered on account of her doubtful origin. These facts I know, and I tell them to you, because I would open your eyes to the false delusion of dragging on a life of anxiety in the hope of obtaining the equivocal gratification of marrying a woman who has deceived you, and of rejecting a proposition which, while it rendered you truly happy and respectable, would secure the comfort of a lovely and amiable girl, and make her grandfather the happiest man in the universe."

This torrent of language which flowed from the old lord's lips, while his eyes sparkled with fresh animation, completely overcame Edward; the effect was, as his lordship meant it to be—staggering. It was clear that the venerable nobleman was vitally interested in the success of what might almost be called his offer to Somerford; nor was this anxiety rendered the less remarkable by the intimate knowledge which he appeared to have gained of Somerford's connexions and pursuits, and the display

made of that knowledge for the purpose, as it should seem, of magnifying the favour he sought to bestow, and of putting his young friend quite at his ease as to anything like a want of candour which he might have felt himself guilty of exhibiting during the preceding part of his intimacy with Lady Emily.

Whether it was, that the arguments and appeals of Lord Lessingham (and he had stricken one chord which required only a slight touch to make it vibrate through his young hearer's heart—the indignity offered to his late mother) had actually shaken Charles Somerford's determination and fidelity towards Katharine, it is now not quite possible to say; but certain it is, that he could not maintain the decisive tone which, in the earlier part of this very singular dialogue, he had assumed; this, indeed, might be owing to the appearance of a growing violence on the part of Lord Lessingham, who seemed to feel more angry at Somerford's staunch adherence to the Maxwell family, than at his insensibility to the great advantages derivable by him, from abandoning them; it was, as a matter of taste, repugnant to his feelings, and he was literally irritated in a high degree

at what appeared rather the obstinacy than the blindness of the devoted lover of the stockholder's wedded wife.

Under the circumstances, Somerford thought it better, and more respectful, to beat a retreat, and thus avoid the decisive answer which his noble friend and patron seemed perfectly resolved to extract from him on the spot.

"My lord," said he, rising from his chair, "I feel myself incapable of maintaining this discussion—indeed—indeed, I am so deeply interested—so overcome by the conflicting sentiments which agitate me, that I am sure it will be better for me—for your lordship—for all of us, that I should leave you now; in the morning you shall hear from me: and assure yourself of this, that whatever course reflection may induce me to pursue, I never can entertain a sentiment or feeling towards your lordship and the excellent Lady Emily that is not of the most grateful and the tenderest nature."

"I believe you are right, Charles," said Lord Lessingham; "we are too much excited to be quite reasonable. If I have said anything which annoys you, with respect to the family to which it is quite clear you are still attached,

attribute it only to an anxiety to disentangle you from an engagement which is neither desirable nor respectable. Believe me when I tell you, as I look at it, that every thing of importance connected with your future career depends upon your dissolving what I cannot but consider the criminal contract into which you have entered with Mrs. Apperton."

"There is one point, my lord," said Somerford, still mindful of Katharine's character and respectability, "upon which, let what may happen, I must disabuse your mind—let my devotion to Mrs. Apperton be what it may, or my determination to devote myself either to her or to a life of single unblessedness, she is no party to the compact."

"Worse and worse," said his lordship; "then, perhaps, if she gets rid of what she evidently now considers an incumbrance, she may, to suit her own fancy, or to ameliorate her exemplary father's circumstances, play you a second trick of frivolity and fickleness, which, after the success of the first, and your humility under your sufferings, seems the most natural course in the world for her to pursue."

"I see, my lord," said Charles, "your

lordship is too much prejudiced against my friends to listen with patience to any exculpation of them, and I——"

"Friends! Major Somerford," said Lord Lessingham; "believe those to be your friends who sacrifice every thing for your sake—believe him to be your friend who seeks an alliance with you, not him who condemns it—believe him to be your friend who offers you a being all singleness of heart, all purity of mind, whose first affections are fixed on you—believe him to be your friend who first entreats and then warns you; the prize is at your foot, reject it and your loss is incalculably great. I speak, perhaps, in parables, but I know the truth of what I say. Go—decision upon this point makes or mars you eternally. And this I tell you, that you may safely believe, no man living is more disinterestedly interested in your fate than I am."

"Assure yourself, my lord," said Charles, "that my gratitude must be unbounded for all the kindness I have received under this hospitable roof. You shall hear from me in the morning. I can better explain myself in writing, and——"

"I seek no explanation," said Lord Lessing-

ham; "you must, of course, follow the impulse of your own feelings and affections; think of my advice—remember my warning—and be assured, let your course be what it may, you can never cease to be an object of vital interest to me."

Saying this, he extended his hand to Somerford, who pressed it fervently and affectionately; the look which the venerable nobleman gave Charles as they parted, was one, the expression of which it would be difficult to describe, but which was indelibly imprinted on the heart of him on whom it fell.

Thus terminated the conversation—and what were the feelings it excited in the mind of the faithful Charles? It was too true that there could be no comparison between the persons submitted to his choice; all that Lord Lessingham had said on the subject was incontrovertible. On the one hand, youth, beauty, rank, wealth, and honours, awaited him; on the other, none of these, for Kate's youth was past, and with it had flown most of her beauty; to rank she had no pretensions, and the wealth she might have expected, had vanished; but more than this, as his lordship said, she had proved herself false and fickle, and had, even upon her

own admission, consented to a marriage of convenience, and accepted a man, convinced, at the moment she did so, that he never could make her happiness.

Is there any such thing as accounting for the freaks of love—for the extraordinary, out of the way proceedings of those who are under its influence? But even these eccentricities, which every body is ready to admit, seemed sober sadnesses compared with the conduct of Lord Lessingham himself, who, reserved and mindful of his dignity and station as he was, seemed to have stepped from his pedestal to volunteer an offer of his grand-daughter to a military officer of small fortune and no family; and that he was quite aware of the very obscure origin of Charles's extraction no doubt could remain, after his avowal of an intimate knowledge of all the proceedings of Somerford's early life, and his declared familiarity with the whole volume of *Maxwelliana*, in which he had been concerned.

Somerford saw, in all the liberality and readiness of his lordship, an amiable desire to sacrifice every thing for the insurance of his grand-daughter's happiness, and he felt duly the dignity of being not only "father-in-law," but ac-

tually father to the "three-tailed bashaw," in the shape of Baron Lessingham, who might hereafter be born; but it was love, not love of gain, that would cement this union; a proper relative equality of age, a similarity of habits and pursuits, were the enchaining and enchanting inducements—in short, a pure and generous affection, totally unlike the feeling in which are founded those "negociation matches," which sometimes take place, and which are scarcely less disgusting in the woman than degrading to the man.

When Charles began to recapitulate to himself all the advantages derivable from this connexion, he marvelled greatly at the excess of good fortune which awaited him, and at the extraordinary condescension which marked the conduct of the old lord; but could he relinquish all his hopes of Kate—of *her*, who for years had been the bright leading star of his destiny?—of her, whose image had visited his night dreams, and the recollection of whom, had occupied his waking thoughts? It seemed impossible! yet, nevertheless, he could not but admit, to a certain, and no very inconsiderable extent, the justice of Lord Lessingham's comments and observations upon the folly, if not

the immorality, of doing what the vulgar call "waiting for dead men's shoes." It was clear that the crisis of his fate was at hand, and that a prompt, and immediate decision was necessary. "Two heads," thought Charles, "are better than one;" and so in every case, except that of a bicephalous infant, they may be; and accordingly he proceeded straight from the noble lord's residence to the boarding-house where his fellow voyager, Mr. Macleod, the Honourable East India Company's Secretary in the Twankey Twaddle department, was residing. He found the nabob on the point of retiring to rest, but he staid his progress to his bed-chamber, and having planted him, in his morning-gown as he was, (which by the way looked like half an old japan screen,) in his armed-chair, detailed to him the whole progress of the intimacy which he must have partly suspected during his occasional visits at Lord Lessingham's, concluding the history with an almost verbatim repetition of the very interesting and important conversation between himself and his lordship, which had so recently terminated.

"You ask my advice, Majorr," said Macleod; "d'ye want ony advice on sich a pint?" (I consider it right to print Mr. Macleod's

words as he thought it right to pronounce them.) "Can ye have a daut apaun sich a pint, Majorr? Ye must murry my Lady Emily of carse."

"And so forfeit my pledge to Mrs. Apperton," said Charles.

"Your pledge, Majorr!" said Macleod; "why, surr, she's murried already, what more woud she have? Besides, 'spose, sir, she's a wuddy, wot then? She has no fortun'—not a farden. No, no, she fuggut you, when ye ware out of hare sight, why, in the divil's name, shou'd you be so partiklar abut her—eh, Majorr?"

"Why, Mr. Macleod," said Charles, "she was deceived into the marriage to which she consented."

"Deceived was she," said the Nabob; "well then there's nothing whatever like deception in the uffer of Lord Lessingham—there's a beautiful bibi saab, Lady Emily, the granddaughter of a Burrah saab like my Lord, with a tittle into the burgain. I only wush I had the reversion of the offer, Majorr."

"As a matter of feeling, I really cannot give up my old prepossession," said Somerford; "and yet how very advantageous is the prospect

which the union with Lady Emily would open to me."

"Advantageous prospect," said Macleod; "the view from a hill furt is a fool to them—runk and dagnity buth at your feet. Why, even to me, a senior Merchant in the Hunnurable Ist Ingy Company's suvvice, late Secretary in the Twanky Twaddle department, and eligible for a sit in cuncil—even I—I tell you so—should jump at the chance of sich an acquisition."

"But you would not feel so, if your first love still haunted you, Mr. Macleod," said Charles, endeavouring to excite the nabob to sentimentality.

"Fust love, sir!" said Macleod; "wat in the divil's name has fust love to do with it?—*my* fust love was a littel cobbling shumaker's daughter in Hedge Lane, Lunnun. I fancied her perfection—I was sixteen years uld at the tim, and I dremt of her by night, and thowt of her by day, and sighed for her, and watched for her both day and night;—a pretty mess I'd have made if I had thowt it necessary to murry Miss Caroline Wagstaffe on my return to England—senior merchant in the Hunnurable Ist Ingy Company's suvvice, and eligible for a sit in cun-

cil—because she happened to be my fust love."

"I admit a peculiarity of feeling upon the point," said Charles.

"My dear friend," said Macleod, "putting the rank and fortune whully out of the question—only luck at Lady Emily's person and accomplishments—luck at her eyes—demants; luck at her lips—churries; luck at her tith—purrls—and a figgur entire semetry—perfection by Jooputur."

"I admit her charms—I—"

"And as for Mussus Apperton, you know I saw her at Brighton—she's leddy like, I grunt, but *passeé* surely—fine expression of countenance, good eyes and tith, I grunt; but dear me, such a defference in manner. Lady Emily is so delicate—so trunsparent—so sulph like—I declare to Gud she's puffect, entirely puffect—that's my view o' the case."

"Then you think," said Charles, "that falsehood to Katharine would be a venial crime."

"Falsehood, Majorr!" exclaimed the yellow chief, "she's murried, I tell ye—she's suttled—she has chosen a spouse, and there an end—its absolutely criminal to bind yourself to one whose hand and heart I hopp are entirely another's.

Take my advice, accept with grutitude the uffer of Lord Lessingham, and become the sire of a race of lords yourself."

"I will consider the case on my pillow," said Charles. "I sincerely thank you for your advice."

"Which, if it perfectly coincides with your own feelings, you will follow," said Macleod; "my opinion is like that of a cuncil in one of our Istern cullunies, where the membirs say their say, and the Governor does his do; if their nutiuns agree, well and gudd; if they dunt, the cuncil are at liberty to protest, but the Governor's measure is carried—eh Majorr?"

"Not so," said Somerford; "I will carefully consider the bearings of this extraordinary affair; for I honestly tell you, that so much of happiness as is here presented for my acceptance is enough to startle the firmest heart. Assure yourself of one thing, Mr. Macleod," continued he, "that I am not selfish, and that whatever decision I may come to, on this point, I shall be governed by motives which you will not, I am sure, fail to approve."

"I have no doubt, my dear Majorr," said Macleod, "not in the lest; but, I would just have you put the case fairly and duspassionately,

as I did in the memorable time when I was resident at Pallydyneveraram. It cost me nearly two hours, although I was hurried by circumstances, before I resulved upon hanging a Rajah, three of his sons, his uncle Bungabyravamy Row, and two of his nevvies; but I did it, and if I had time, I am sure I could make you see that I was governed by motives which *you* could not fail to approve."

"Mine is a less desperate case," said Charles, "so having had the advantage of the opinion of a councillor——"

"No—not actually——eligible for a sit in cuncil, I said," interrupted the punctilious prig.

"Eligible for a seat in council," continued Charles; "I beg pardon—I will go to my room; and having put all the circumstances fairly before myself, decide and act upon my decision, whatever it may be, the first thing in the morning. And so good night, sir; with many apologies for detaining you so long on my affairs."

"Nut a wud—nut a wud, my dear Majorr," said Macleod. "I have little doubt what will be the result of your deliberation. You'll murry my Lady Emily, and I shall have the happiness of seeing an excellent, worthy, high-spirted young fellow, united to one of the

sweetest creechurs that ever I saw in my whull existence, let the cullur be what it might."

The council here broke up. Macleod convinced that he had overcome all Somerford's scruples about Mrs. Apperton, and Somerford very much puzzled as to the course he ought really to pursue.

During the night, Charles had, as may easily be supposed, but little sleep; yet all the occurrences of the past evening appeared more like a dream than reality. The kindness of Lord Lessingham was *impayable*, the affection of Lady Emily was most flattering; vanity conspired with gratitude, and interest with something very like love, to confuse his ideas, and puzzle his will. Hour passed after hour, and the announcement of each, by the church clock fell on his ear; nor was it till late that he had come to the decision which he was so soon to announce to the expectant guardian of his lovely prize.

No sooner had he, after weighing the improbability, nay, the almost impossibility of Kate's ever being his—her fickleness—the duplicity of her father—the slights offered to his mother—his banishment and disgrace in poverty, and his reception on his return in prosperity, with the

beauty, wealth, rank, and attachment of the exquisite Lady Emily Denham—no sooner had he made up his mind to the course he should pursue, than he rose from his bed, and enveloping himself in his dressing-gown, proceeded to write that letter to Lord Lessingham, which decided at once the important question.

What the resolution was, to which Major Somerford came at this particular period, the reader unfortunately is not here permitted to ascertain. Circumstances of new and strange interest call his attention from the lodging-house at Cheltenham, to the narrow streets of the city of Villa da Horta, in the fertile island of Fayal.

CHAPTER V.

"I have a little villa in the Abruzzo,
A limped brook waters its verdant meads,
And various scenes of woodland, hill, and dale,
Diversify the beauteous spot, replete
With all that nature uncorrupted wants;
The cleanly mansion in a garden placed,
(Though breathing marble people not its grots,
Nor painted triumphs animate the walls,)
Is yet convenient——thither I'll retire."

BELLERS.

THERE is scarcely any part of the world, at the same distance from town, so little known as the Western Islands, to one of which our friends from Madeira have been voyaging during the digression into which I have wandered. On the score of precedence, they might claim more attention than most colonies, since they were discovered in the year 1439, some say, 1460, by Vandeberg, a merchant of Bruges, and were subsequently named by the Portuguese, *Islas dos Acores*, from the number of hawks by which they were inhabited—*Unde derivatur*, Azores.

The Azores, like the Muses, are nine in number; but of these, three are at a great distance from the rest. The other six form a beautiful and interesting cluster, and the sailor passes, among the group, the gigantic Pico, whose head towers far above the clouds, on his starboard bow, Fayal on his larboard, with St. George's in the distance right ahead; and on his starboard quarter, Terceira, rendered latterly familiar to the ear of patriots and politicians, by the establishment of a certain fantoccini regency in its principal city, Angra.

Katharine watched with an anxious and scrutinizing look, the gradual development of the features of the scenery, as they neared the land; she saw by degrees, the fertile fields of Fayal, distinguished by the hedge-rows which bounded them; and she felt that the face of the country more closely resembled that which of all countries was dearest to her, than any other she had yet visited. It must be owned, that her father, who had taken to navigating somewhat late in life, watched earnestly too; but with a less philosophical feeling; his anxiety was kept alive, and his interest excited by a continual apprehension of perils and dangers,

which invariably threaten those who approach such a coast as that of Fayal.

But there was yet another passenger, whose mind seemed so totally absorbed by the expectation of what was to occur when they landed, that all surrounding, all passing objects were unheeded; his eyes were rivetted to the spot, which the master of the vessel told him was Villa da Horta; and as they opened the valley where first the houses of Port Pin present themselves to view, with the high land of St. George's Island beyond, and the brown hill, with its three-watch towers, rises to the sight, his heart beat, and tears flowed down his manly cheek. His wife, watched with the deepest interest the workings of his countenance. Could Hannigham, the disinterested generous Hanningham, anticipate a meeting of such extraordinary delight, with an agent of his house? or feel so powerfully the influence of mercantile speculation, as to shed tears as he approached the place of that agent's residence? She had never seen him so moved before; but she respected his feelings, and permitted him to believe she had not witnessed the effect produced upon him.

Before noon, the good brig Rover entered Fayal bay, with a fine breeze from the south-east; and found her way safely to the place of her destination, to the unspeakable joy of the surgeon, whose mind had been filled with certain forebodings and misgivings, touching a hidden danger in the channel between Pico and Fayal, known by the name of Chapman's Rock; a touch on which would, in all probability, have proved fatal to the whole expedition.

On an approach to the harbour of Villa da Horta, the fertile appearance of the country, contrasted with the white towers of the churches and convents, gives a great relief to the eye which has been long wearied with the sameness of the sea; but Katharine, although her experience in Portuguese colonial cities and towns was confined to a knowledge of one of the best of them, Funchal, was sufficiently aware of the real state of things, to feel no great confidence in the luring and tempting aspect of the capital of Fayal, as viewed from the brig. She was fully prepared for the horrors in which she was so soon to be located; dirt, and filth, and an overwhelming smell of fried oil and garlic; houses like pig-styes, and streets choked with mud,

with no scavengers save the pigs themselves, which in this island have long legs and curly tails, and stand nearly twelve hands high; the bullocks rarely exceeding ten. All this, and worse, did Mrs. Apperton compound for; and she could yet scarcely account, in her own mind, for the violent anxiety of Hanningham to get ashore; being assured that he, like herself, must be pretty well prepared for the luxuries of the "flaunting town" of Villa da Horta; and not quite comprehending, although it must be confessed she shrewdly suspected, the cause of his violent anxiety to see Mr. Wilson, his agent, before any others of the party landed.

There are mysteries in all trades; and so it appeared, that the secrets of this agency were of sufficient importance to induce Hanningham to leave his wife and his friends actually prisoners on board the Rover, of which good brig, those friends, including most specially and particularly Mr. Maxwell himself, were heartily sick and tired, while he pulled ashore at the first opportunity. He professed, however, to think, that it would be better to prepare Mr. Wilson for their reception; and if he, as it was most probable, should not have sufficient accommodation for their whole party under his own roof,

it would be infinitely wiser to secure lodgings or rooms at some hotel—save the mark!—where they might be sure of a resting place after their fatigue, without having the additional trouble of hunting for it, when they came ashore.

On the approach of the brig, showing her colours, a dirty old ragged union jack was hoisted upon a crooked staff, at the house of the English consul, one Firkins, an antiquated personage, who exhibited himself at the landing-place, in a second-hand coat of a lieutenant of the Navy, (a service which he had never disgraced by belonging to it,) in order to look in some degree respectable and, as he thought, consular. Firkins and his family were treats, and subsequently afforded much amusement to the new arrivals. But of those more anon.

Three hours elapsed after Hanningham's departure, before he returned; but when he did, he gave so favourable an account of his mission, and its success, as amply repaid the anxiety of the passengers on board. He had secured accommodation actually in the house of Mr. Wilson, whom, with his daughter, he had found quite well; a circumstance which appeared to interest him infinitely more than seemed compatible with the relative situation of principal

and agent in the wine trade. However, warmth of friendship is no crime; and, extraordinary as was the alteration which had taken place in his spirits and manner, since his absence on shore, his wife was delighted to see him happy; and Maxwell and he conversed apart, each smiling and looking as pleased, as if the greatest possible benefit had accrued to them from the result of their voyage.

It was past seven o'clock when the party were safely lodged in the boat which was to convey them to the shore; less than half an hour brought them to the water's edge; when, rather to show his authority than his courtesy, Mr. Consul Firkins was ready to receive the party. He invited them to his house, which lay directly in their road to the residence of Mr. Wilson, a gentleman in whose praise Mr. Firkins was extremely diffuse, seeing that he expected to reap, in the sequel, some benefit from his sycophancy.

Having reached his abode—it being, as it should never be forgotten, Sunday—Firkins insisted upon the whole party walking in, which, as it was impossible to refuse, the party agreed to do; and having been ushered out of the consul's shop and counting-house, which looked

and smelt more like a wet stage coach-office in London, in muddy weather, than any thing else; into an apartment at the back of the house, something between a barn and a ball-room, the eyes of the visitors were astonished, and their ears astounded, by finding the consul's four unmarried daughters, as ugly as their mother, and almost as vulgar as their father, passing the Sunday evening in waltzing with each other, for the amusement of some non-descript people who were seated round the room.

Only conceive the amazement of Mrs. Apperton and Mrs. Hanningham, when, on addressing these female Yahoos, they discovered that only one of them, either spoke or understood English—daughters of an Englishman—who for five and forty years had held the office of British consul. Now really this is too bad: such people as Firkins should be called by some other title. When we recollect that Rome had her consuls, that France had her consuls, and that England has all over the world, gentlemen and diplomatists in the character of consuls, and then see the same appellation bestowed upon a pig-selling, onion-vending savage, as ignorant of every thing but the art of money-

making, as a cobbler, and as ravenous after gain as a wolf after sheep, it is actually sickening. It makes one grieve that the Portuguese of Fayal should have seen before their eyes for almost half a century, such a terrible specimen of ignorance and vulgarity, swaggering about in a tarnished uniform, to which he had no right, as his Britannic Majesty's representative at Villa da Horta—*nominé*, Tom Firkins.

The visit to the consul was as brief as possible, although the visitors could not escape without being dosed with a small glass each, of a filthy mixture, mentioned before in these pages, called Fayal wine; not one drop of which grows in Fayal, but is imported from Pico, and there cooked up for the palates of the inhabitants, or sent aboard homeward-bound ships, under the name of Teneriffe, or even Madeira. Maxwell tasted the stuff with suspicious and professional cautiousness; and when it passed his lips, he cast a look at Hanningham, strongly expressive of a feeling, that if Mr. Wilson's agency was in any degree connected with the circulation of that sort of draught, the less business he had, the better for the credit of the Funchal firm.

At length, freed from the vulgar importunities of the natives, the party proceeded along the dirty narrow streets, upwards towards the

country—Wilson's House being situated on the very verge of the town. What particularly struck the strangers, in the course of their progress, was the uniform costume of the women—it is the same in all ranks and classes, and consists of a blue cloak and hood, invariably worn out of doors; this disguise, which has superseded the more graceful veil, covers the whole of the dress and figure, and is so perfect and impervious, that flirtations have actually taken place between ladies and their husbands, from whom no other invention could have extorted so much civility and attention to their wives.

They continued their journey over the sharp pebbly pavements, of the hilly street, until they at length reached the residence of the agent. He was ready to meet and greet them, although he seldom passed the threshold of his door, and never at any time the boundary of his garden. His reception of Mrs. Hanningham was warm and cordial, and knowing what she *now* knew, Katharine was not so thunderstruck as she otherwise would have been, at seeing him rush into her father's arms—she recognized him in an instant, —she had seen him ONCE BEFORE.

She had scarcely time to collect her spirits after the realization of her suspicions, before she felt herself clasped to the heart of the old

gentleman, seeing at the same moment, Wilson's daughter, a lovely girl of about nineteen, rush into Maxwell's arms, and hide her burning cheek in his bosom.

This very dramatic scene did not take more time in acting, than it takes in writing. Its effects, however, were more striking—everybody seemed to know why it occurred, yet nobody had spoken on the subject—no confidence had been made—no course of proceeding had been anticipated—it was a burst of feeling, comprehensible to all the parties, explicable by none; and from the instant the characters subsided into rationality, and assumed their seats, it appeared as if, by some tacit convention amongst them all, that not one syllable of elucidation should pass their lips. The time present was their own, and the future, if it gave promise of brighter days, might be anticipated; the present and the future, were therefore at their command, the retrospective was prohibited, and with this apparent understanding, the happy—for in their degree they were happy—the happy party fell into the discussion of ordinary topics, and presently seated themselves round Wilson's hospitable board at supper.

Hospitality at Fayal, though, as it is every-

where else, amiable, is not expensive. The cheapness of Villa da Horta is one of its great recommendations, although when strangers have to deal, and the British consul is the medium, Firkins does all he can to destroy even that. Forty fine fish smoke on your table—that is, if you have room for them—for the charge of a vintain—one penny-halfpenny, and a dessert of one hundred oranges costs less than a shilling. Not a spot is uncultivated on the face of Fayal; ploughs, harrows, clover, and corn fields, carry the mind back to home; and the thrushes and blackbirds, unknown in most other colonies, seem to speak English as they warble their wood notes wild. Every thing grows there, except cabbages, which are universally destroyed by a peculiar sort of grub, as soon as they break from the ground; but grapes, spices, even sugar, corn, lemons, cloves, besides all our English fruits, flourish in the greatest perfection. Woodcocks are in abundance; pheasants and wild rabbits are plentiful; but neither hares nor partridges are known.

The feast, however, that the assembled party at Wilson's enjoyed, was of a higher order than that, which money could procure, or Firkins overcharge: there was an interchange of affec-

tion, a return of gratitude the most powerful, an expression of satisfaction the most entire, in that small circle, which all its members felt, and which none dared express—there was a mystery —there was a secret, which charmed their hearts, but which sealed their lips. They were extremely well pleased with themselves: two or three points remained to grieve about; but that they were there, and together, was so great a blessing to some of the party, that the minor evils of their situation were at the moment forgotten.

"We lead a primitive life here," said Wilson; "had you, Mr. Maxwell, fallen upon our island suddenly from the bustle and interests of a busy professional career in London, it would perhaps have struck you more forcibly; but having undergone a probation in Madeira, (which, however, Mr. Hanningham describes as being gaiety itself compared to this,) you are not so sensible to our dulness."

"An Englishman, Mr. Wilson," said the surgeon, "carries all over the world a very large portion of comfort with him; it may be prejudice, to admire the effect he produces upon surrounding objects, but it certainly is truth, that he anglicises every thing within the sphere of his influence."

"Always excepting," said Wilson, "our official Englishman here, Mr. Consul Firkins, whose family and habits are still entirely Portuguese—not Portuguese of the mother country, but of the colonies. However, to-morrow my daughter shall show you the lions of our dirty little city, and you shall judge, by a peep into other parts of the neighbourhood, how much she has done to improve our humble residence. As for me, of course I stir out but seldom—the apprehension that I——"

"Exactly," said Maxwell, interrupting him, "that you might over exert yourself in your delicate state of health—I see. Well, to-morrow then we shall put ourselves under Miss Wilson' guidance, and enjoy the sights."

"I hope your son finds the climate of Madeira agree with him," said Wilson; "I have never seen him, but I have heard most favourable accounts of him."

"Yes—yes," said the surgeon, evidently anxious—why I cannot pretend to say—to avoid the conversation; "he is an excellent, exemplary young man, and amongst other proofs of his amiability of disposition, has had the good fortune to secure the invaluable friendship of Hanningham."

"If Hanningham had *not* been his friend," said Wilson, greatly agitated, "he would have been the most ungrateful of——"

"To be sure—to be sure; so he would," said Maxwell.

"I suppose," said Wilson, "he will lose his heart to some of those black-eyed beauties who abound in the island where he is now, and so——"

"No, no," said Maxwell, "I——"

"I apprehend," said Mrs. Apperton, "that my brother's heart is not his own to give."

"Indeed, Katharine," said the surgeon, "I know nothing about that; and I don't see very well, how you should know more than I do. I—"

"My child and I," said Wilson, "very often talk of you all—of whom else should we talk?—and we have certainly settled that he could not remain a bachelor merchant in Madeira."

"Indeed, my dear father," said Miss Wilson, who seemed as much averse from talking of family matters as Maxwell, "I never said anything about Mr. Maxwell. Why should I? he does not even know me."

"No, to be sure he does not," said Maxwell; "it would be very odd indeed, Miss Wilson, if he did. But never mind my poor Ned; he is no doubt taking care of his own business;

let us take care of ours. Love and wine go very prettily together in a convivial song; but in common life, a man can surely sell Madeira without being married; and I dare say Ned will remain single for some time to come."

"I am quite sure he will," said Katharine.

During the two hours through which this sort of "touch and go" conversation lasted, it seemed singular that it never went or touched upon the affairs of Apperton, and the rumour of his death. At Fayal, from its peculiar position, unless a return fruit schooner happen to bring later intelligence, a Plymouth paper four months old is a novelty to be caught at, and talked of as a phenomenon; and in the ordinary course of things, London news comes to Villa da Horta quickest, *viâ* the United States or even the East Indies: nor, which perhaps was even more remarkable, did Wilson and Hanningham exchange one syllable with regard to the agency, or indeed any other point connected with mercantile matters.

When they parted for the night, there was an earnestness of affection exhibited between Miss Wilson and Katharine Apperton quite incompatible, as it would have appeared to a stranger, with the shortness of their acquain-

tance; and when the three ladies got together for a half-hour's *cause*—gossip is a better word perhaps—the perfect intimacy, the complete unreserved and entire confidence of the party in each other, would, if any body had seen it, have seemed miraculous; while their conversation, had any body heard it, would have seemed rather the result of inspiration than any thing else. To be sure, female hearts and minds soon assimilate; but save and except the Rovers, no ladies in Christendom ever so soon swore an eternal friendship as Miss Wilson and Mrs. Apperton.

After breakfast the junior branches of the party proceeded on their promised ramble of discoveries, leaving Mr. Wilson and Mr. Maxwell to a *tête-à-tête*:—a chess-board was placed before them—both the elderly gentlemen professing a Phillidoric attachment to that scientific game; but it did not escape the notice of the loungers, when they returned from their stroll, that the white queen's pawn was the only piece that had stirred during their absence, and even that faithful attendant had begun his march before their departure, seeing that Maxwell had him "betwixt his finger and thumb" just as they were quitting

the little drawing-room that opened into a neat English flower-garden.

The travellers proceeded, down towards the water before they went to see the government-house—its possessor, a man of considerable eminence, receives, as a reward for his arduous duties of legislation, a stipend of about one hundred and fifty pounds per annum, and a duty on pigs, which are at Fayal taxed as horses are in England, and, as I have already stated, are nearly as large as those animals are (in Shetland at any rate). It was suggested to be etiquette for Hanningham to pay his respects to his Excellency; but it was agreed to postpone his visit, seeing that they had ascertained that his Excellency was at that moment at home.

The party first visited the church of Saint Antonio, which is a very neat building; not clean, for that nothing in Fayal, except Wilson's house, was; but the ornaments were in better taste than usual. St. Antony's coat and waistcoat were of a better cut, and his wig, with a Ramillies queue, was much less grotesque than saint's wigs in those parts usually are. They then proceeded to the convent of St. Juan,

which stands on an eminence, and has an agreeable garden; within its walls nearly six hundred women are immured. Well may the highly gifted Mrs. Norton, in her description of a faded beauty, exult in the inviolable freedom of English women, when she makes her heroine say,

> "But I refused him; though my aunt did say
> "That it was an advantage thrown away.
> "(He an advantage!)—'that she'd make me rue it—
> "Make *me* a nun—*I'd like to see her do it.*"'

One sweetly pretty girl came to the grate, and strange to say—is it strange?—selected Hanningham as the friend to whom she chose to address her little story, in preference to any of the ladies. The story was brief, but so closely resembles one, once told to myself under nearly similar circumstances, that it is interesting as exhibiting the frequency of similar occurrences.

She told Hanningham that her name was Isabella; that she was the daughter of a Portuguese nobleman, and had been betrothed in marriage to some man whom she had never seen; that upon the breaking out of some disturbances in Lisbon, consequent upon a vain and impotent attempt to force an English-made constitution upon the country, she had been for security sent to Fayal from the convent to which she had been previously conveyed on the death of her mother. She added, that

her sister, younger than herself, was also in the convent, and that if Hanningham would come to the parlour the following evening, she would ask leave of the lady abbess to give him some tea and sweetmeats, and that she would bring her sister to the grate. Hanningham, at the risk of being shut up himself, asked the poor girl if she would like to go to England, to which she answered 'Most willingly,' when an ancient gorgon making her appearance at the moment, Isabella *said* she was perfectly happy where she was.

Hanningham saw her once again to inquire if there was any body to whom he could convey a letter, or intelligence of her; but she shook her head, and a tear fell from her bright black eyes; she was afraid to speak—she thrust her hand through the grate; but the space between the two *grilles* was too wide to permit of its being kissed, which in the way of friendship it would otherwise most certainly have been; but when the turnabout came round, Hanningham found in it, a bunch of artificial flowers, a paper of sweetmeats, and a small gold ring. Considering all things, however, Mrs. Hanningham had no cause of jealousy.

They then proceeded to the monastery of San Francisco, where the ladies were permitted to remain in the church, while Hanning-

ham was most graciously received by the principal, who conducted him over every part of the building and into its gardens, where, in a sort of large alcove, were placed the effigies, as large as life, of every monk who had died in the house, set up over his burial-place, in his proper habit. In the refectory, on a long table, the dinner for the fraternity was laid, which consisted of a sort of biscuit, placed over a large glass of Fayal mixture, which Hanningham, as a judge, pronounced execrable, the whole place smelling worse than Mr. Firkins's consul shop. Hence Hanningham was reconducted by the Reverendissimo Padre, who attended him to the very threshold, and after an absence of half an hour, rejoined the ladies, who began to think that their companion had been entrapped by the pious body, and induced to renounce the sins of this wicked world, and his fair companions into the bargain.

Their expedition occupied the greater part of the forenoon; but their absence had not been of sufficient duration to afford an adequate opportunity to the two strangers, Wilson and Maxwell, to talk over their private affairs.

It became matter of discussion in the evening of this day, whether they should prolong their stay at Fayal beyond the next afternoon. The

master of the brig Rover was completely at their orders; but the charges, under whatever denomination considered, in the way of freight, or demurrage, were heavy, and Hanningham having achieved the object of his wishes in seeing his agent, felt it prudent to do a violence to his own desire to stay where he was, for any longer time, and hurry his departure for England.

Wilson and Maxwell had, during the progress of the rest of the party, discussed, amongst other matters, the business nearest the heart of the latter, concerning the misconduct of Apperton, and the question as to what it would be most advisable in the first instance to do; for the best informed of the party had but very imperfect intelligence to act upon in a matter of so much delicacy. Wilson's advice was, that Maxwell and his daughter should, on their first arrival in England, as indeed had been previously suggested, assume a fictitious name, under which they might remain quiet and unmolested in the country, while Hanningham should exert himself in the arrangement of affairs in London. Maxwell would have been glad if Wilson could have accompanied him too, but that was of course impossible.

Miss Wilson, whose beauty and grace, whose winning manners and numerous accomplishments

made her at once an object of admiration and affection, lavished upon Hanningham so much kindness and attention, that a stranger would have wondered at the evenness of Mrs. Hanningham's temper, who not only heard such protestations, but saw such practical proofs of their mutual regard, in bearing a rival so near her throne; but it seemed that she was afflicted with the mental blindness by which, as I have already said, all the world appear to be more or less affected, for while she endured the most palpable exchange of something very like love between her husband and her friend, she seemed less moved than she was, when he exhibited his ring and bouquet, the present of a poor girl, placed beyond his reach, and secured within a couple of grates two feet and a half asunder. Such, however, are the extraordinary inconsistences of our nature.

The day wore on and the hours fled, and communications passed between the party and the master of the brig; but considering the usual freedom of intercourse in colonial life and the unceremonious customs of such places as Fayal, not to speak of the hospitality of Wilson, a stranger would have wondered, that although an extremely gentlemanlike man, and although he had given them every cause to be pleased

and satisfied with his conduct during the voyage, the master of the brig Rover had never been invited to breakfast, dine, or sup at the agent's. Nay, on the second day of their residence in the island, when he had found his way to the house, Hanningham happening to see him approach by the flower-garden, went out to meet him; and having been joined by his wife and Mrs. Apperton, took his arm, and walked him down again to the water-side, and saw him safely launched, in his boat, on to his native element, and did not quit the beach till he was well on his way to the brig.

It must be admitted that the schipper, who was conscious that he had exercised every proper degree of liberality towards his passengers, felt this slight; but he attributed it to the character of the place rather than to any other peculiarity; for when he landed, and proceeded to the consul shop of Mr. Firkins, that illustrious impostor, informed him that he had taken the liberty of ordering him dinner and a bed at Graves's hotel, the landlord (and waiter) at which was the son of another English vice-consul, who, like the Misses Firkins, understood no language but Portuguese, and who, having cleaned the knives and laid the cloth,

sat down to the said dinner with the said master of the brig, as if he were *giving* him a hospitable reception. The weather getting worse as the night closed in, the master of the brig chose to remain on shore, but strolled down to the consul's *pour passer le temps*, when again the Fayalian hospitality evinced itself by the consul's informing him that they always went to bed early at the hotel; which intelligence he conveyed to his guest just at the moment when Mr. Firkins and some select friends were about to feed, upon a supper laid out on a long table in the adjoining room. The schipper, who was a bit of a wag, seeing that his Excellency, (as Firkins would have himself called by his dependents,) was anxious to begin his repast, which he had resolved not to do, until the stranger was gone, brought himself to an anchor, and staid at least an hour after the hint had been given him to go, and made himself nearly sick by drinking half a dozen glasses of the Fayal mixture, which, filthy as it was, its still more filthy owner was anxious to save.

But the negative want of hospitality on the part of Firkins was not the worst of it; for when the moment of departure arrived, the worthy gentleman sent off in a boat the stock which the schipper had bought of him at exor-

bitant prices, seeing that no dealer dared compete with Firkin's when an English vessel was concerned. He however delayed doing so, although he had been paid for the things in the morning, until the evening, when it was quite dark, blowing fresh, and the brig under way, standing on and off waiting for them. Amongst the stock, which chiefly consisted of vegetables and lanky pigs, was one bullock, and two half ankers of brandy, which the consul had somehow got into his possession, and for which he charged a notable sum. When the boat got alongside there was a good deal of sea running; the vegetables and the pigs, however, were hoisted in; but by a heavy lurch of the brig, one way, and a deep pitch of the boat the other, the brandy, and the bullock, went overboard, and the schipper was forced, having no time to litigate, to put up with the loss and be off without them. Poor good easy man, innocent of the extent of these manœuvres, he contented himself with denouncing, in his homely way, the stupidity of the Fayal boatmen, and in which, in the simplicity of his honest heart, he firmly believed, never suspecting that the bullock and the brandy had before the accident been thoroughly secured with three or four fathoms of line, and that the moment the good

brig Rover squared her yards, filled, and was away, the brandy, bullock, and all, were towed ashore, just as well as ever, and that before the next day dawned the animal was in the stable, and the spirits in the cellar, ready for another shipment at the same prices, to the next dupe who could be found to give them.

I am not sorry for this digression, because in the scuffle we have avoided the melancholy ceremony of taking leave, and a detail of the "sweet sorrow," which had nearly lasted till the morrow. Miss Wilson appeared more deeply afflicted than any of the party; the separation seemed to her the death-blow of all her hopes and expectations. But what those hopes and expectations actually were, it seems very unlikely that we should, at all events in the present stage of this history ascertain. Certain it is, that Mrs. Apperton and Miss Wilson were, during the stay of the former in Fayal, inseparable, their conversation seemed deeply interesting, and as their parting was so decidedly affectionate, it is to be inferred that their acquaintance, recently as it had been formed, and short as was its duration, was excessively agreeable and highly satisfactory to both of them.

The good brig Rover might still have gladdened the eyes of those whom she had left be-

hind, but night concealed her from their view, and when the schipper took his next observation, she was bowling along with a fine steady breeze—Terceira bearing fourteen miles S.S.E,. Gracioso N.N.W. twenty miles, Pico W.N.W. four miles, St. George's N.W. eight miles. In vain did the fair and deserted daughter of the agent Wilson wend her way, in the morning, to the rising ground on the left of their quiet and secluded residence; no vestige of the Rover was visible. She was speeding on her voyage, which in order to relieve the anxiety of the reader, that is, if he feels any; it may be proper here to say she concluded on the ninth day, at three o'clock, at which time she let go her anchor at Spithead;—but having said thus much, we must revert for a moment to Mr. Edward Maxwell, the solitary though not sleeping partner, in the mercantile house at Madeira.

It is impossible to describe the misery of the poor devoted young gentleman's situation, or the state of his nerves and feelings, as he paced the long empty, dreary rooms of the house, or looked over the gallery into the quadrangle, and saw two or three squalid girls sitting huddled on the stairs waiting for alms or food; or affected to busy himself by giving orders, about literally nothing; for until ships come, and a

demand arises for the staple commodity of the island, everything is as calm and quiet at Funchal, as may be.

One thing, however, occurred to him, which has occurred to many other people, who being similarly situated, have had nothing else to do; and that was to improve the house, during Hanningham's absence, by uniting two additional rooms to the rest of the suite of apartments. These rooms were specially his own, and would have communicated with the rest of the rooms on the same floor, had not a small dark closet intervened: the anihilation of this closet was the favourite object of the deserted Ned Maxwell; it was only used as a lumber-room; the partition which disconnected it from the other rooms was thin, and only of wainscoat, so that the great achievement which he so anxiously desired to perform, could be completed by doing what a sailor would call "knocking away the bulk head." What are wainscoatings or partitions to an improving genius; light, air, and even something like a view would be gained by the change, and he resolved to occupy himself so effectually in the fulfilment of his design, that his partner and his partner's partner should pronounce him on their return the Palladio of the island, the very Nash of Funchal.

Carpenters were summoned, saws, planes, and chisels were put in motion, and very speedily did the "wooden wall" succumb; but still there were obstacles for which Maxwell was scarcely prepared. Where could he deposit the huge cases and boxes with which this closet had been filled? this was however settled by the advice of a confidential servant, and the new discovery of one detachment of packages was actually the groundwork of a series of new improvements. No less than fifteen of the most ponderous cases contained pictures—the accidental acquisition of these articles of *vertu* gave a new turn to the inventive disposition of the young architect, and he resolved to make his arrangements chime in, with the exhibition of these works of art, which seemed to him too long to have been hidden—again were the saws and chisels in activity, but directed especially against the cases in question.

First came to light, a Claude, or a Wilson, or—a copy—beautiful, clear and brilliant; then a Canalleti, undoubted; thirdly, a Wouvermans, with a trumpeter as natural as life; and next a Cuyp, with a grey round-ended horse just fit for Wouvermans trumpeter; then a decided Gerard Dow; an old gentlewoman selling carrots, at a window, over a Turkey carpet,

with a bullfinch in a cage, and some gold fish in a glass globe beside her; and then an unquestionable bit of Teniers, depicting vice, drinking, drunkenness and its effects; all these together with a bouncing dame in the best style of Rubens; and a smoke dried specimen of Rembrant, as black as a hat, were all exposed to view, and places speedily assigned them, according to the best rules of classification, and the judicious disposition of light; when one huge case attracted the notice of the enterprising Maxwell. Large nails and great care seemed to have been used in securing this huge object, and the young wine merchant almost hoped it might be one of Lawrence's largest portraits; that perhaps of Kemble in Hamlet, with Yorick's scull in his hand, which was painted in the year of the great scarcity in England, and was criticised by some blundering blockhead as a representation of a starving Briton thanking Providence for the blessing of a brown loaf. What it was, he of course knew not; but the uncertainty added greatly to the interest which he felt; and accordingly heavier hammers and larger chisels were sent for, and greater exertions made to burst the cearments which held the hidden treasure.

Crash went the sides, away split one piece, out

flew another, until at length the picture, closely covered with baizes and flannels, was seen. Yet still in disguise; for such had been the care, with which it had been deposited in its resting place, that half an hour more was consumed in ripping open the cloths in which it was enveloped. The assiduous workmen, however, proceeded to divest it of all encumbrances, and raising it against the wall of the apartment, the light burst full upon the canvass, and exhibited to the astonished view of Edward Maxwell, a whole length portrait, finely painted, of his mysterious beauty! The lady of Long Acre—the sylph of Charing Cross—the Venus of the Green Park. The likeness was accurate beyond belief—it was she—she herself—of that no doubt could exist—*but then who was she?*

CHAPTER VI.

"When shall we three meet again?"

SHAKSPEARE.

At the present juncture of our history, it should seem that all the persons most intimately connected with each other, and whose union would be most conducive to the clearing up of certain mysteries, were to be widely separated from each other, and dispersed, as it were, over the face of the earth.

The Maxwells and Hanninghams had quitted Madeira just at the instant when their presence, at least that of the latter, would of course have elucidated in a moment the mystery of the hidden and now discovered picture—that there was something very like mystery connected with it, was clear; for none of the servants or clerks,

confidential or ordinary, to whom Edward applied for information, could or, if they could, would enlighten him in the slightest degree upon the subject. They only declared that they knew nothing of the picture, that they had never seen anybody there, resembling it, and most of them denied any knowledge of the fact that there were any pictures in the house. One, a little more communicative than the rest, observed that Mrs. Hanningham had a sister, and that as it was evidently a modern portrait, it might be a likeness of her; and another, who was nearly as good a hand at discovering resemblances as the old lady Ligonier is said to have been, who was startled with the likeness between the master of the house where she was making a visit, and the coal-scuttle which the servant brought into the drawing-room, and which her ladyship mistook for her hostess's son and heir,—found out that there was a striking similarity between the nose in the picture and that of Mrs. Hanningham herself, excepting, to be sure, that the lady's nose was aquiline and the picture's Grecian; and that the eyes, save that they were black instead of blue, which Mrs. Hanningham's were, had exactly the same expression as those of that lady.

If, however, Edward was tormented and plagued to death by this accidental denouement in Madeira, the Maxwells were more embarassed by what they discovered to be the real state of the case with respect to Apperton in England.

They reached Spithead, as I have already mentioned, in safety. It was then suggested that Maxwell and his daughter should land in the evening at Ryde; and that, there, in some quiet lodging, and under an assumed name for the present, they should remain secluded until Hanningham should be able to send them such intelligence as might guide them in their future proceedings.

Ryde might be considered, in these days of improvement, when the place has grown from an inconsiderable fishing village to a staring, flaring, watering-place, no very fit spot for concealment; but with proper precaution as concerned Maxwell, who, under the pretext of being an invalid, would not mix with the visitors in the streets or walks, or other public places, Katherine felt assured she could manage so as to avoid all suspicion of their real names, or views in settling there. The master of the Rover had been on shore and secured them a quiet lodging, away from the bustle of the fashionable

acclivities, and the landlady being prepared for their reception in their new character and under their assumed names by the story which the schipper had given, and satisfied without further inquiries by a deposit of a month's rent for her apartments in advance, was ready to welcome the sick Mr. Martin and his amiable daughter. The assumption of this name was suggested by the schipper himself, who remarked, with a prudence and forethought which neither the surgeon nor his daughter were likely to possess, that as all their trunks and linen were marked with the letter M, it would be but correct to give themselves some name which began with the same letter.

To Maxwell, whose hatred of the sea was not to be overcome by practice, the quiet and repose of the cottage at Ryde, which, although it commanded a fine view of the splendid yet treacherous element, was covered with honeysuckles and jasmines, and shrouded by two or three old trees—rare ornaments to marine villas —were quite soothing and delightful. The spot seemed exactly suited to the purpose to which they had appropriated it—there was a stillness and a steadiness in the little comforts of land—and of all lands England—which tranquillized

the old gentleman; and although he could not but see with pain the anxiety and watchfulness of Kate for intelligence from London respecting Apperton, his health rallied even in the short space three days; and he prayed that circumstances might permit him, during the remnant of his life, to enjoy ease and quiet such as he then possessed, even under a roof as humble as that which then sheltered them.

There was one sad thought which preyed upon Kate; one, too, which she ought not to have cherished until she had ascertained the fate of her worthless husband. She could not but feel the wretchedness of her situation, in being deprived by circumstances of hearing from Charles Somerford — her friend—she called him—her dear friend. If she could have guessed what had happened during the last two or three months of her absence, she might perhaps have felt an increased anxiety upon the subject; for although she ought to have relinquished every hope of ever being his, when she found herself the wife of another, it becomes necessary to admit that she had done no such thing; and certain it is, that if she could have beheld him domesticated with such a being as Lady Emily Denham, in such a family as that

of Lord Lessingham, her feelings would have been most powerfully excited. She, however, was unconscious of the trials to which his fidelity was exposed, and felt anxious merely because she was deprived of the power of communicating with one, in whom she never could cease to feel the warmest interest.

It must, however, be admitted that there was yet another being about whom Maxwell, and Kate, were anxious to hear something, and from whom they felt assured they should hear much, if they could bring about a meeting without danger; and this person, as the reader may perhaps already anticipate, was no other than our old friend Godfrey Moss. Little did they think, while planning some contrivance to let this ancient friend of the family into the secret of their residence at Ryde, that he, the identical Godfrey, was to be found every day, from ten till four, sitting in one of the wooden alcoves on the pier at that very place, watching the waves, and getting his usual "sniff of the briny," at the moderate rate of twopence per diem, or as he compounded for it, one shilling per week, Sundays included. Such, however, was the case; but there he might have sat, and smoked, and sighed, and grumbled till Doom's-

day, had not a slight attack of illness which Kate suffered on the second or third day of Maxwell's stay in the island, rendered it necessary, or at least satisfactory to Maxwell, to call in a medical gentleman whose agreeable manners and pleasant conversation were found to be most powerful auxiliaries to his drugs, draughts, potions, and powders.

This accomplished disciple of Esculapius was—not to speak it profanely—as well versed in the news and politics of the popular watering-place in which he practised, as Mr. Richard Gossip, who in the days of "my grandmother" operated in a different manner upon the inhabitants of the village where he flourished. To ingratiate himself with his new patient, and, as a punster would say, to secure his Martin as a swallow, the eloquent and vivacious Leech proceeded to enumerate all the "characters" that enlivened Ryde; and, amongst others, having given precedence to a mad lord and a half-witted baronet, he named Mr. Godfrey Moss as a most eccentric, but very agreeable person, whose happiness seemed to consist in grumbling, and who spent all the time which he could spare from eating, drinking, and smoking, in finding

fault with his wretched fellow "creturs," as he used to call them.

Little did Mr. Squills know the interest he had excited, by the mention of this greatly-desired friend, nor conceive how very much he had puzzled his hearers as to the safest mode of attracting him to the cottage. The Maxwells listened to the doctor's detail without betraying their emotion; and the doctor became interested in the Maxwells, because it was evident from the old gentleman's conversation, however disguised, that his knowledge upon medical matters was equal, if not superior, to his own. The name was not familiar to his ear, but still the attempt to conceal his acquaintance with the subject on which they spoke was vain; and at length the doctor—so called by *brevet* at Ryde—was compelled to ask Maxwell if he was not, or had not been, in the profession. To this question, Maxwell returned a somewhat evasive answer, which caused, when Squills returned home, an earnest and assiduous search in the list of the two colleges to discover any practitioner of the name of Martin.

It may seem strange that the surgeon, being a surgeon, should have called in medical assist-

ance in a place where he so anxiously wished for concealment; but those who know the diffidence of the faculty when so dear an object as a daughter is concerned, will appreciate the paternal solicitude which induced him to apply for extraneous assistance; besides, as medicines might be necessary, the technicalities which Maxwell could scarcely have avoided in his prescriptions, would have been more likely to lead to suggestions and inquiries respecting the strangers, than a straight-forward application to the professional man of the place; Maxwell having quite well assured himself, before he did so, that he knew nothing personally of the Ryde practitioner.

When Squills had retired, Maxwell and his daughter began to consider the means of securing the society of Mousetrap, and of acquiring the information they were so anxious to obtain from him; and it was at length decided to write him a note, directed to the hotel where Squills had told them he was living, in which enough should be said to guide him to the cottage, without committing to paper the secret, which to poor Maxwell appeared the most vital in the world—he, with

the prevalent blindness to self-knowledge, being fully convinced that every sheriff in England had received orders to arrest him the moment he set foot in the country, and that bailiffs were lying in ambush in every town and village, ready to execute the mandates of their immediate superiors.

To the care of Kate was this special correspondence confided; she felt certain that a note of invitation in her well-known hand, although written in a fictitious name, would instantly apprize Moss of the real state of the case, while the matter might be made perfectly unintelligible to any ordinary reader. But then she feared one of those sudden ebullitions with which she had been so long familiarized, and which would perhaps in an instant of surprise, and, as she flattered herself, pleasure, betray the whole of the mystery to anybody who might happen to be in the room with him. Therefore it was that she couched her billet in the following terms:—

"If Mr. Moss should be disengaged this evening, and will call on Mr. Martin at Melrose Cottage, he will find a friend who will be extremely glad to see him."

This folded three-corner-wise, and sealed with the device of a thistle, with "dinna forget" as a *devise*, was dispatched to the domicile of the eccentric Godfrey, and left there according to order, by the rosy-elbowed damsel who attended on the Maxwells in their retirement.

When Godfrey "toddled" (as he called it) home from the pier to dress for dinner—an operation which he performed by dipping the end of a towel into a basin of water, and rubbing his nose and mouth therewith; wiping just the ends of his fingers (bronzed with snuff) with whatever moisture there might be then left in the cloth, and shaking some of the pulverized pleasure of his life out of the folds of his coat—he found the triangular summons from Kate.

If there is one thing more worrying to a quick person than another, it is watching the deliberate motions of the apathetic recipient of a letter; he reads and re-reads the superscription, examines the seal, and spells the post-mark, in order to ascertain from whom it comes, before he opens it; when if he would but dash at it, crack the seal, and tear the envelope, he would know at once, and to a certainty, who was the writer. To this process was Mrs. Apperton's triangle submitted; the thistle caught God-

frey's eye as he pored over the seal with his glasses on.

"Thistleum," said he to himself; "some Scotch cretur with no clothes to his back—"dinna forget"—trash! Let's see—'If Mr. Moss is disengaged'—no go—Mr. Moss is *not* disengaged. 'Mr. Martin—Melrose Cottage,' Bou! cottage—scarlet door, with a knocker and brass plate on him, and a great green-topped lamp over him! Melrose Cottage—'glad to see him'—I should think so—not to be had, Mr. Martin, whoever you are—provided for, to-day—some of the doctor's stuff at five—roast mutton and port wineums—'find a friend at Melrose cottage'—the friend must stay till to-morrow—perhaps a hoax altogether—'dinna forget'—the cockney creturs would read that as English, and think it a Scotch invitation to tea. 'Dinner forget'—but I 've no time to lose; and as for Mr. Martin, whoever he may be, I dare say my friend Squillums will be able to tell me something about him."

Here the clock striking five, spoke so eloquently to Godfrey's anxious ear, that his soliloquy closed abruptly; and in ten minutes he was seated in the dining-room of his hospitable host, the doctor.

While the events of this afternoon are passing, the reader may perhaps be desirous of knowing something of the movements of Charles Somerford, who retired from his conference with Mr. Macleod in a state of excitement and worry, which few people who have not been placed in similar situations of difficulty can duly appreciate. All that his Indian friend and councillor had urged, as to the great importance of the connexion with Lord Lessingham in a worldly point of view, he fully entered into; he admitted to himself that Lady Emily was integrally, and without regard to any other consideration, as near perfection as mortal is permitted to be. Her manners, her disposition, as well as her mind, her talents, and accomplishments, were all enchanting and enchaining Her beauty, blighted as it was, became more interesting than it even was in its full blaze and radiance; and the tenderness and gentleness with which illness had soothed and softened the buoyant spirits of her youth, rendered her too winning, too delightful, to be long associated with, with impunity. Somerford loved her—as a brother—as a friend—nay, perhaps if the secrets of his heart had been laid open, it would have been found, such is human fallibility, that

his firm determination to reject this splendid opportunity of making such an alliance, was the result of principle rather than of passion, and that his resolution to remain faithful to Kate was founded upon a sentiment of honour which would not suffer him to put the charms and attractions of Lady Emily in competition, in his mind, with those of his first—and faithless—love.

Whether there are many men who, having been treated—no matter under what circumstances—by a mistress, as Somerford had been treated by Miss Maxwell, would have pursued so strait a path, or maintained so rigid an observance of a pledge—which that mistress had herself violated—it is not for me to determine; it is sufficient for us to know that Charles, before he slept, wrote the following letter to Lord Lessingham:—

"My Lord;

"When our acquaintance commenced, and your lordship in a manner most flattering to my feelings, invited and received me into your house on terms of friendship, I little thought that circumstances would have compelled me to endeavour to exculpate myself from an im-

putation of duplicity, which I fear must now lie upon my character; or to enter into explanations, which cannot be interesting to your lordship, except as they may tend to justify the kindness which I have experienced under your lordship's roof.

"The conversation which passed between us this evening, renders farther concealment of my real circumstances as impossible, as it would be dishonourable; and although a fear of incurring a charge of vanity, has prevented my earlier stating to your lordship that, with which nothing but the occurrence of an event I had not the presumption to anticipate, could justify my troubling your lordship, I feel myself now compelled to do so.

"Honoured beyond my utmost deserts by the favourable consideration of one of the loveliest and most amiable of human beings, what course have I to pursue?—but one—and that, one which however decidedly it blights the bright prospects of happiness I could not fail to enjoy under other circumstances, I am sure your lordship cannot fail to approve.

"The liberality, the nobleness of spirit, which your lordship has displayed in your conduct towards me, in the very peculiar situation

in which I am placed, render me grateful beyond the means of expression; and the kindness and favour of Lady Emily Denham are too deeply engraven on my heart, ever to be effaced; but, seeing and affectionately admiring all her virtues, and all her merits, I should consider myself unworthy of the vast accumulation of favours which would be heaped upon me by an alliance with her, if I obtained those favours, and that happiness, by the violation of a pledge made—not to others—but to myself, in my early youth. It is clear, from what passed last night, that your lordship is aware of many of the circumstances to which I allude; amongst them, as you have said, you are aware that the faith plighted to me by the object of my earliest affections, has been broken; but I have a strong feeling upon the point, however cogent and powerful your lordships arguments on the question undoubtedly are; and I declare to your lordship, that I do not feel exonerated, by a failure in the lady's constancy to me, from an engagement I made in the face of Heaven alone, and when no human eye could see me.

"But, my lord, two points suggest themselves here, on which I earnestly implore your lordship's attention.

"The first is, the character of my conduct since my admission into your society: exonerate me, let me implore you, from the suspicion that in any way, by word, by look, by manner, or by implication, I put myself forward in the character of one aspiring to the hand or heart of Lady Emily Denham; and from this springs the other point which I wish more especially to be considered.

"If I were merely to declare that I had no object, in my constant association with your lordship's family, but the enjoyment of a society rendered most charming and fascinating to me, by the combination of attractions it possessed; and were I to dilate upon past circumstances or recall events gone by, to show that my views were wholly disinterested, except, as I have already observed, in the pleasure derivable generally from an association with your domestic circle, I might be doubted, and those who less know my heart than myself, might still charge me with what I believe is considered a venial crime, but which I confess I regard differently—heartless coquetry, and an intention to excite an affection, which I knew I had bound myself never to realize. But, my lord, when I detail to you the circumstances of my birth—when I tell your

lordship, that my mother was the deserted illegitimate child of some unknown seducer, and that the dishonour and discredit thus thrown upon my lineage lost me the object of my earliest attachment, the daughter merely of a professional man; your lordship will see that the very reason of the case will clear me from any such imputation. I came into your house a stranger; you received me kindly, hospitably—I may, I must say, affectionately; surely you do not—will not—cannot believe, that a man feeling as I do, and sensitive in the highest degree upon points of honour, as far as I am myself concerned, would have so used or misused the privilege you kindly afforded me, of mixing in your domestic society, to gain the affections of a lady of Lady Emily's rank, by doing which, I might inflict misery on her, in one case, or bring disgrace upon her in the other. Acquit me, my lord—I know you will—of any such designs, and judge of my feelings by my conduct.

"My regiment is at present in Ireland; we expect orders for foreign service almost immediately: I must join them. Breathe not a word of this letter to Lady Emily; let her only know that I have been suddenly called hence, and early to-morrow I go; or if your lordship should

feel that it would be better I should take leave of her, I will obey your commands, and stay until the evening. Order me as you please.

"My heart is too full to permit me to say a thousandth part of what I feel. If I have been imprudent in concealing from your lordship a suspicion which I had upon this point, attribute it to a diffidence which I have already said would not permit me to believe what now appears to be true. It is, indeed, a severe trial, and terminates our acquaintance in a manner far different from that which I had hoped for. Pray let me hear from your lordship, and assure me that I am not considered entirely unworthy of the kindness I have received.

Believe me, my Lord,
your lordship's faithful,
and obliged servant,
CHARLES SOMERFORD."

This letter, somewhat wild and incoherent as it was, Somerford despatched by a messenger in the morning. Lord Lessingham, who was an early riser, received it long before his darling Emily was stirring; Somerford did not wait long for a reply; in less than an hour he received the following:—

"DEAR SOMERFORD;

"I can find no fault with either your past conduct, or your present determination. There is not a word to be said; remember this, however, that none but persons meanly prejudiced, and of very little minds, consider faults or follies hereditary. However unworthily your grandfather might have acted, the exemplary conduct of your mother, whom he deserted, wholly obliterates her involuntary disgrace. Assure yourself, that with such a heart as yours, such a bar in your escutcheon is no blot. Amongst your sincerest friends and well wishers, always reckon,

Yours truly,

LESSINGHAM."

I will manage about your departure. I think a regular separation is to be avoided: go—and God be with you!

It was evident, from the tone of Lord Lessingham's letter, that he was attached to Somerford, and that his heart's hope was frustrated by the decided determination he had made with respect to Mrs. Apperton. Somerford felt relieved by the arrangement which his lordship had made, for he felt not exactly a doubt, that his

stern resolve would have yielded to Lady Emily's tears in a parting interview, but he felt that he would rather have her, left impressed on his memory with the same placid smile of kindness which beamed on her intelligent countenance as she quitted the drawing-room the night before, than agitated by passion or grief; passion that he dare not return, grief that he might not assuage. Those who have felt that duty and honour compelled them to relinguish all that might have made them happy through life, will perhaps enter into the feelings of poor Charles Somerford.

There is a sequel to this portion of the story, which perhaps may as well be given here.

Charles Somerford proceeded on the following morning on his route to Dublin, where he had not been many days, before an order for the removal of his regiment to the West Indies arrived. This most unexpected order was to Somerford something like sentence of death; not in a metaphorical sense, which as a transportation from the land which was so shortly to contain Katharine, it might be understood to be; but in the literal matter-of-fact signification of the words; seeing that having been so long an invalid in a hot climate, his return to another,

and a less healthy one, would almost certainly induce a relapse, and send the devoted Major to an untimely grave.

There are secrets in all trades, and mysteries in all professions; and amongst Masonic lodges of which the prophane have no knowledge, the Horse Guards ranks as one; there, by some arrangement, of the nature of which I am not in the least aware, it was settled that Somerford should go out with his regiment, and then exchange, by some process, with another major who was there, and who did not wish to come home; and so with this scheme properly devised and concocted, the Major once more embarked on the briny ocean, and took his departure for Jamaica or Barbadoes; which, mattereth little to the carrying on of our history.

Lady Emily was prepared for the departure of her beloved Charles—for he *was* beloved, with an ardour and fervency that man has but little idea of. The amiable girl had long in secret nursed the affection, which very early in their acquaintance warmed her heart, but she concealed her feelings, and struggled with a preference which she could not avoid giving to merits and attractions like Somerford's; but when her poor grandfather perceived—as he did, and as she

saw he did—that her manner towards his young visitor was more decidedly kind and affectionate than to any one else; that she sat and listened to hear what he read, or sang, or played, with an intenseness of attention which no other person or pursuit could command; when she saw this, and saw that Lord Lessingham appeared studiously to bring and leave them together; that his conduct towards Somerford was more than friendly, more paternal;—what could she think, but believe, as was the case, that her grandfather, anxious for her happiness, had determined to sacrifice some little worldly prejudices about rank or fortune, to secure her comfort through life, by uniting her to the man whom she loved, and whom he considered worthy of her affections.

Lord Lessingham had determined to do exactly what his grand-daughter anticipated; he forced nothing, he exacted nothing; but permitted affairs to take their course, convinced at last, that their termination would be, an offer from Somerford, and an acceptance by himself. He did not certainly foresee the possibility of Charles having a prior engagement; and if he even had suspected it, since they occasionally spoke of Kate, the very fact of her having mar-

ried another lover, would have set all doubt upon that point at rest, for his lordship was not at all prepared for so singular an act of self-devotion as that which in the sequel, Somerford confessed himself to have committed.

Think then what a blow—what a deadly blow it must have been to a delicate creature almost on the verge of the grave, to feel herself rejected, as she did, in the short yet to her, terrible conversation with Somerford, which has already been recorded. It alarmed her dignity—it aroused all the woman in her bosom, and exhibited her to herself, timid and shrinking as she ever had been, from all the world before—repelled and discarded by the man to whom, not only her manner, but her words themselves, had betrayed her affection for him.

It was of itself a blow, almost too much for her; but when it was followed up by the announcement of the actual departure of the object of her affections, it became fatal; for weeks she remained silent and absorbed, her eyes fixed on vacancy, and her cheek pale as the driven snow; sometimes a tear would fall, and a convulsive sob follow; but else she was placid and calm.

A change of scene and air was recommended, and they proceeded to Devonshire; but scene

or air was nought to the poor broken-hearted Emily; she submitted patiently to all that the physicians directed or prescribed, and the venerable Lord Lessingham watched hour by hour over the flickering light of her existence, the termination of which, was to leave him old, infirm, and alone in all the world; for sorrows had fallen upon him, and death had been busy in his house; and here before him lay the last inheritor of his temporal honours.

Why trace we all this misery—why profane a scene so sad and sorrowful, by looking upon such a wreck of hopes and joys? One little year before, the roses bloomed on her downy cheek, and the diamond sparkled in her eye—now, dim were their lights, and pale that beauteous flower. Man, in his various pursuits, derives consolation in grief, and his thoughts, painful and harrowing at times, are diverted by the mixture of his avocations; but woman—woman who loves—lives on that love alone; all her thoughts, all her hopes, all her wishes centre there. What then must be the pang, the cruel, cutting, killing pang, which at one blow destroys them all.

The lovely innocent remained for several weeks scarcely living; and when the last evening

of her existence arrived, the change from sleep to death was hardly perceptible—in fact, she merely ceased to breathe, and those who were round her, could know only by the cry of grief which burst from her agonized grandfather, that her pure soul had fled.

CHAPTER VII.

——"I do remember an Apothecary."
SHAKSPEARE.

"I SAY, Squillums," said Moss, when he was well placed at the doctor's, "do you know who the people are, that live at Melrose Cottage—Martin, is n't that the name?"

"Martin," said the doctor; "the young lady is ill—a patient of mine."

"Natural consequence," said Moss; "but what are they?—where do they come from?—what do they do?"

"They seem," said the doctor, "mighty quiet people. By their own account, they have just come to England. I was called in to attend the young lady; but I cannot help fancying the father to be of the faculty."

"Knows more than yourself, perhaps," said Moss.

"He does not think so," said Squills, "or he would not have called me in."

"No proof that, replied Moss: "you all know the Tom-foolery of the thing, and you don't like to play your tricks upon yourselves or your families—quite right, too."

"I can give you one more bit of information, and that is all," said the doctor; "the daughter's name is Kate, and, though she is called Miss Martin, wears a wedding ring upon her finger."

"La! my dear," said Mrs. Squill, "don't talk in that way—it's downright scandal."

"A ring!" said Moss, "Kate!—Kittums!—halloo!—this means something—let me see!" saying which, he took out the note which he had received, and glancing his eye over it, returned it hastily to his pocket. "Ah! Martin —creturs—well!"

The whole truth had flashed upon him; and now his anxiety to get to them, was easily demonstrable in his fidgetting haste to get through his port wine, and, as he said, "*be off.*"

"What, before tea, Mr. Moss?" said the

doctor's lady; "you, too, who are so fond of your toast and butter."

"That's right, ma'am," said Moss, "remind me of your toast and butter, do—six-and-eightpence, eh? No, no; none of your toast and butter to-night—I must go."

"Which way are you going?" said Squills; "I must take a turn, too."

"To prevent the creturs getting well too fast," said Moss. "I 'm going to the hotel. I have some business to do; but I 'll see you in the morning."

"Shall I say anything to the Martins about you?" said Squills.

"No, no; I know nothing of the Martins, nor they of me," replied Moss, who walked, or rather hobbled, as fast as he could in the direction of the hotel, and out of the way of the scrutinizing doctor; and when he had run himself out of sight, proceeded to inquire the way to the *rus in urbe* which his friends inhabited.

It was located in a sort of court or alley, with a clipped hedge row on each side, and had, as Moss truly anticipated, a brass knocker and plate on the door; the former Mr. Godfrey Moss used with such dexterity, that in less than a minute the maid, with the morn-like fingers

opened the portal wide, when Godfrey, with the greatest care and caution, lest he should betray his friend the surgeon, or involve him in any difficulties by his awkwardness, said, "Is Mr. Maxwell at home?"

"No, sir," said the female, "no Mr. Maxwell lives here, sir."

"Maxwell did I say?" said Moss; "Martin I mean."

"Oh yes, sir," replied the virgin, her plump face relaxing into the sweetest of plebeian smiles, "Mr. Martin is at home, and Miss—up-stairs, sir, if you please."

And accordingly up-stairs mounted the maid, and up-stairs followed Godfrey, whose surprise was somewhat excited when the girl threw open the drawing-room door, and announced him by his proper name, Mr. Moss.

"Why how do you know me?" said Godfrey.

"Every body knows you, sir," said the maid.

"Psha!" said Moss, "silly cretur! Ah, Mack—Mack—Martin I mean—Kate, how are ye—how d'ye do? Give me a kiss, Kittums! Give us your hand—well, alive and merry, eh? but——"

"Hush!" said Kate; "recollect the size of

our house, and the thinness of the partitions. We must talk no secrets here."

"Tell me," said Maxwell, in a whisper, "have you any news of Apperton?"

"He's off, sir," said Moss; "gone to the other world."

"Dead!" said Kate, in a tone so very peculiar, that, in mercy to her character as a wife, I shall not attempt to describe it.

"Dead!" said Moss; "not he. He's gone abroad to prevent dying, I believe. Oh, the cretur!—that king of the Cat and Cauliflower, as I call him—forgery is about the best of his crimes."

"Mind, Mr. Moss," said Maxwell, "thin walls."

"What, are there many listening creturs?" said Moss.

"No," said Katharine; "at the present moment there is nobody in the house but the maid servant and——"

"I tell ye what do with her," said Godfrey: "tell her to step to the hotel, and desire Yelf to send me a bottle of *my* particular ginnums; that will give the maid an errand, and when she comes back, Kate, give you a job to make some of the old stuff."

"Still at it, Moss," said Maxwell.

"Still," said Moss; "slow poison, like Dr. Johnson's green tea, isn't it, Maxwell? But how well you are looking. So you have had Lord Hillingdon at Madeira; he was here before he went, for a day or two—such a cretur! Well, and how's Neddums?"

"We left him quite well," said Kate, and partner to a wine merchant."

"Wine stuff!" said Moss; "what Neddums running about with a tin funnell and a bit of tallow candle stuck in a lath—bou! Has he found out his flying Dutchwoman yet?"

"No," said Maxwell; "and never will, as I take it."

Kate, according to Godfrey's instruction, before the conversation went any farther, despatched the maid in pursuit of the desired beverage; and taking advantage of her absence they gleaned from Moss, in his odd disconnected mode of conversation, that Apperton's conduct had been most atrocious, and that nothing but a precipitate flight would have saved his neck.

This was a terrible discovery for poor Katharine—her husband gone beyond redemption, ruined in fortune and character, and yet firmly bound to her for the rest of his natural life.

Much better, as Moss said, would it have been, that he had died; but some people die to grieve the hearts of the survivors, and others live to plague their fellow-creatures and these are amongst the curiosities of the world.

"I should recommend you, Mack," said Godfrey, "to put out your feelers; try and beat up the enemy's quarters before you come out of your concealment."

"I have already taken precautionary measures," said Maxwell. "Hanningham, who is my son's partner at Madeira, has gone to London for the purpose of instituting inquiries."

"Hanningham," said Moss; "what relation is he to the man who murdered his partner—any? I hope not; perhaps the fancy runs in the family."

"He is the son of that Hanningham," said Maxwell.

"Pretty connexion, Kittums!" said Godfrey.

"He is, I assure you," said Mrs. Apperton, "a most delightful person; and his wife one of the quietest, most unassuming of women."

"Does he ever refer to the accident that occurred to his father?" said Moss.

"Not to strangers of course," said Maxwell.

"He has talked to me much upon the subject."

"Why I suppose he is rather shy of the subject," said Moss: "a gibbet, by way of a family tree, makes a man silent about his ancestors."

"For my part," said Kate, "I have heard so much on the point, and heard such excellent traits in his father's character, that I believe him to have been unjustly convicted."

"What were the circumstances—I almost forget?" said Moss; "things like that, go in at one ear and out at the other."

"The story is short," said Maxwell. "He had entered into partnership with a man whose temper was violent, and whose mind was ill suited, as it seems by all accounts, for the cares of business. Some great errors appeared in their books, which Vernon—so was the partner named—either could not or would not explain, and a long smouldering discontent at length burst into a violent quarrel."

"Here 's the ginnums, Mrs. Kate," said Moss, seeing the Hebe of Melrose Cottage enter with bottle, jug, lemons, sugar, and all according to the ancient regime, and in conformity with Mrs. Apperton's directions. "I

beg your pardon, Mack—that is to say, Martin; but I 'll listen patiently—only I 'm rather thirsty, and——go on."

"It was one evening, after a more than usually violent altercation between them," said Maxwell, "that they quitted the city together in Hanningham's gig——"

"Oil and vinegar in the same bottle," said Moss.

"It had been always Hannningham's custom to carry pistols in this gig on their nocturnal excursions to his country-house, somewhere near Tooting; and on this occasion those weapons were in the carriage in which Vernon, according to his usual custom, took a seat as far as Balham, where *he* resided. On *this* night Vernon was shot dead upon Clapham Common; the noise of the firing attracted the notice of some people on the road, and they succeeded in stopping the gig, in which Hanningham was seen flying, rather than driving along the road from the scene of blood."

"That 's awkward," said Moss—"one leetel bit more sugar, Kate. Well, Mack?"

"Lights were procured," said Maxwell; "and Hanningham, in the midst of his alarm and trepidation, made the bye-standers compre-

hend that the gentleman who had been his fellow traveller was shot. They traced back their way along the road, and there, at about five hundred yards from the place where they apprehended Hanningham, discovered the lifeless body of Vernon, who had been shot through the head, and could not have survived the wound an instant."

"Through his head!" said Moss; "which side—eh?"

"That next to Hanningham," said Maxwell.

"More awkward still," said Godfrey.

"The search for the pistols was next proceeded in," said Maxwell; "for when the gig was stopped, no such weapons were found in it; while Hanningham, who admitted, perhaps needlessly, perhaps unintentionally, in the hurry and confusion of the moment, that his pistols were on the floor of the gig when they started, said he concluded, that on the fall of Vernon from the vehicle, and the desperate plunge the horse gave when alarmed by the shot, they must have fallen on the ground. This suggestion was followed by an immediate search along the road; when at about a distance of twenty yards from the body, and within four yards of each other, the identical pistols were

found—one loaded with ball, and the other, having been recently discharged."

"That's worst of all," said Godfrey.

"Listen," said Kate; "for I assure you, I am deeply interested, and although I know the facts by heart, I always watch the narrative in the hope of catching some new point upon which to exonerate the man I believe to have been innocent."

"Considering that he has been hanged more than a twelvemonth, I think the balm to the wound comes too late—but go on," said Godfrey.

"Hanningham was conveyed to town, and an examination took place the next day. The turnpike men, at Newington, deposed, that they heard the prisoner and another person using most violent language to each other as they drove through the gate. That they knew the prisoner by sight perfectly well, from his constantly passing and repassing. It was also shown in evidence, that it was usually the custom of Hanningham to take a groom with him and Vernon on their return to the country; but that on this particular night Hanningham had, contrary to that custom, told the man to remain

in town, as he should not want him. Upon this evidence he was committed."

"Pretty strong too," said Moss.

"On the trial, the corroborating circumstances of his guilt were more conclusive; and the details, some of which I forget, formed such a complete piece of circumstantial evidence against him, that the jury seemed hardly disposed to wait for his defence."—

"What *was* his defence?" said Moss.

"Why rather a weak one, I admit," said Maxwell. "He stated that they had been attacked by either foot-pads or highwaymen, he could not tell which—that he did not see the person or persons—that the shot fired appeared to come from behind him—but that there was no previous attempt to rob them, and that he could give no other account of the affair."

"The servant who had been directed for that night to remain behind, contrary to the usual custom, proved that he had loaded the pistols and put them, as they were always put, under the seat on which his master sat and drove."

"The excitement was, as you may remember, so great," continued Maxwell, "that one dare scarcely express a thought of Hanning-

ham's innocence. The indignation of the jury, which unhesitatingly returned a verdict of Guilty, appeared to communicate itself to the judge, who, in passing sentence, in the most elaborated manner, inflicted pangs more terrible than death upon the prisoner; and Hanningham was executed on the top of Horsemonger Lane prison, on the following Monday."

"And he never confessed?" said Godfrey.

"On the contrary," said Kate, "his last breath was spent in making the most fervent and solemn asseverations of his innocence. Asseverations to which the purity and excellence of his previous life gave great weight with unprejudiced persons. They had none, however, in the official quarter, and the law took its course."

"I recollect," said Moss, "the day of the execution was a tremendously stormy day—I remember it quite well."—

"No matter," said Maxwell, "I should not have touched upon the subject, but that I wish you to like young Hanningham; and as you see that the whole case turned upon circumstantial evidence, the chances are—at least so I think—that his father suffered innocently—and I for myself believe that to be the case: but you must

promise, should we live to meet again, in a quiet home of our own, never to make the slightest allusion to the circumstance in Hanningham's presence."

"Me,—no," said Moss; "leave me alone—I may talk to the faculty of killing their patients, and such trash as that, but that's only a capital joke—a capital punishment is another thing altogether."

"And pray," said Kate, "how have you become so intimate with our medical adviser here?"

"Cottoned to *me*, Kate," said Moss—"I wasn't right, so I had some of his physic—never could persuade him to accept of any money—took it all out in my society; and so whenever I have been here, he has first fed me gratis till he has made me ill, and then physicked me for nothing till he made me well."

"A very agreeable system," said Maxwell: 'if he has many patients on the same terms his profits must be wonderful."

"He has taken a partner," said Moss, "one that looks after the twopences. I hate him—a cretur that would live upon the white of an egg on Monday; on the yolk, Tuesday; and eke out his Wednesday's dinner with broth made

of the shell. When he came in, out came a bill to me, as long as your arm—two draughts and pill, five shillings; ditto ditto, five shillings—so I goes to my doctor and shows him the 'little account' as his cretur of a partner called it. 'I'll settle that,' said Squillums, and away he goes into the parlour, behind a green curtain, and tells this chap, that I am a friend, and never pays on no account whatsoever. What do you think this young parsnip-faced puppy says?—Oh! says he, 'If he is a friend, of course he shall go on on the old terms; only we had better contrive to drop him into powders—bottles cost money'—did you ever hear of such a cretur?"

"Has the doctor, as you call him, any family?" said Kate.

"Two daughters," said Moss—"one fair, delicate, and good natured; the other dark, fiery, and a she wit. I call her his black dose, and her sister, his mild emulsion—eh, Mack?"

"Your technicalities are capital, Mousetrap," said Maxwell; and scarcely had he said it, when the door of the little drawing-room opened, and exhibited to their sight the identical parent of the two medicinal Venusses, who, resolved to satisfy his suspicions as to the

destination of Godfrey Moss, made a merit of a second visit to his fair and convalescent patient.

"Why, Medicus!" cried Moss, as he entered the room.

"Why, Mr. Moss!" exclaimed Squills; "upon my word, you are very snug and comfortable. I don't wonder now at your anxiety to quit my house. You, madam," continued he, addressing Kate, and looking at the punch-making apparatus on the table, "seem to know the way to Mr. Moss's heart."

"I have so long been accustomed to his fancies," said Kate; and then suddenly recollecting herself, she looked exceedingly silly and very red.

"I did not know," said the Galen of Ryde, "that you were acquainted with Mr. Martin—the—"

"Martin—bou!" said Moss.

"My dear friend," said Maxwell, who clearly perceived that the potion Moss had been swallowing had added to his communicativeness, in an equal proportion to the dimunition of his discretion, "we have met before, and I hope we shall continue to meet."

"I only meant to say," said Squills, "that when I mentioned your name to Mr. Martin,

he did not seem to recollect it; and when I mentioned Mr. Martin's name to you, you were equally at a loss."

"Come, Pillbox," said Moss, "take a glass of this. Oh, I 'll mix it for you; Maxwell don't care for the sugar and water, and the ginnums is——"

"Maxwell!" said Squills, "then I *am* right. Now I recollect, sir, to have had the honour of being once in your company before, and I am now in the presence of one of the most eminent men in the profession. I——"

"Indeed, sir," said Kate, "my father—I—that is——"

"Oh, stuff, gammon, trash!" said Moss, "it's all my fault; but that cretur is as close as a poor-box. Mack, you know what secret-keeping is—never tattle—it *is* Maxwell. All my doing; I never was good at a mystery—old friend of mine—I——"

"I feel myself sadly humiliated," said Maxwell, "by this discovery. Misfortunes inevitable, and no fault of my own, have rendered this temporary disguise necessary. You are now aware of it—I am sure I may confide in your honour."

"That you may, sir," said Squills; "if the

feeling that I have been put into possession of a secret accidentally, did not of itself bind me, the admiration and respect I entertain for your high character and qualities, would of themselves secure you from the consequences of any indiscretion of mine."

"Well said, Bolus," exclaimed Moss, who was so elated by the sight of the Maxwells and the spirit of Yelf's gin, that it was with great difficulty his liveliness could be subdued to the moderate tone which it was absolutely necessary to adopt in so small and fragile a building as Melrose Cottage.

Moss, in the course of the conversation, recapitulated all the misdeeds of Apperton, and then avowed the fact that Miss Martin was in fact the wife of the nefarious exile. "Faith," said Moss, "it was your account of Miss Martin's wedding ring, and the name of Kate, that gave me the first clue to my old and excellent friends."

In social converse passed the evening; the Ryde practitioner forgot all the other patients whom he had said he had to visit; and when his little boy, in a glazed hat, with a basket on his arm, came and said his master was wanted by a lady, Squills sent a short message—the lady

being his wife—to say he could not come; and partook, with great satisfaction and a sea-side appetite, of the small cold collation which was prepared for Mousetrap.

Maxwell, after the departure of his visitors, expressed to his daughter his great regret at the strange communicativeness of Moss, upon a point so closely connected, as he believed, with his personal security; however, it relieved him of a constant nervousness and restraint before the apothecary, who was the only inhabitant of Ryde, with the exception of Moss himself, they were likely to see during their stay there.

In London, things of more vital importance were transacting. There, Hanningham was devoting himself to unravelling the tangled meshes of Maxwell's affairs. He saw the only lawyer the surgeon knew professionally; but he being of the first class of solicitors, turned up his nose at "common law;" and moreover had never been consulted by Maxwell, whose high opinion of his worthy son-in-law, added to an idea, instilled into his mind by that respectable individual, that secrecy was absolutely necessary to the ultimate success of their schemes and expedients, had induced the innocent old gentleman to suffer himself to be robbed, lite-

rally robbed of every thing he possessed in the world, without interposing even a remonstrance or repairing to a human being for council or advice.

The great difficulties which presented themselves to Hanningham, appeared to him to be certain out-standing acceptances, for which Maxwell had rendered himself liable, beyond the total destruction of his actual property. It was of course a matter of the first importance, to ascertain where and in whose possession these securities actually were, and what were the feelings and dispositions of the holders towards the unfortunate acceptor. Some bonds also of Maxwell's were extant; but it seemed that nobody knew exactly where they were deposited.

One event had occurred, for which neither the Maxwells nor Hanningham were at all prepared. A half-brother of Apperton's, it turned out, had been apprehended, tried, and convicted of some active participation in the nefarious proceedings of his relative, and was at the moment of the arrival of the party from Madeira, in Newgate under sentence of transportation. It was from the report of the trial of this man, that Hanningham was best enabled to understand the extent of the villany of Apperton,

who it appeared, in his career of infamy, had not stopped short even of forgery. The reader may perhaps not feel so sorry for the fate of his worthy colleague, who was merely waiting an order to remove from Newgate to New South Wales, when he is told that it was the identical Biddle whose insolence had so outraged the feelings of the Maxwells while they were staying at Brighton.

To this person Hanningham determined to apply himself, in order, if possible, to obtain some clue to the actual possessor of poor Maxwell's securities; and accordingly he proceeded to the prison where he was confined, and with very little difficulty succeeded in obtaining an interview with him.

The events which had occurred during the last few months had made but little alteration in his manner, although his dress was slovenly and his inattention to appearance rather remarkable. Hanningham obtained admission to him without announcing either his name or business, and addressed him with great civility, informing him that he wished for a few moments conversation.

"Well, sir," said the fellow, flippantly and

impertinently enough; "whose business is it about—mine or yours? because it will make an uncommon deal of difference in my disposition to talk, if it should be any thing about myself. Any change in my destination? for between you and I, sir, I think I am infinitely too sharp a fellow to be sent to Botany Bay, whatever you may think."

"My mission here," said Hanningham, "is not connected with any alteration in your fate, I am sorry to say; but as you are doubtless well acquainted with the affairs of Mr. Apperton, and I am very much interested about them, I wished to ask, as you can do him no harm by being explicit, nor do yourself any good by maintaining silence upon certain points, whether you would be disposed to give me some information with respect to certain bonds and bills, and other liabilities, in which Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Apperton's father-in-law, is said to be seriously involved."

"Will you allow me to ask you one question?" said Biddle—"are you an attorney?"

"I am not," said Hanningham; "I am a merchant, and interested upon this point, because I have undertaken, at the request of Mr.

Maxwell, for whom I have a high regard, to endeavour to trace out the possessors of these documents.

"And where is the proud old dunderheaded doctor at this present time?" said Biddle.

"Mr. Maxwell do you mean, sir," said Hanningham.

"Yes, I do, sir," said Biddle; "if it had not been for his proud, overbearing behaviour to me, and the sneers of his vain family, I should never have been here. He and his, insulted me, and insulted my half-brother, and I swore I would be revenged; and I am—but I have been caught in my own trap. However, sir, whoever you may be, if I knew where you could lay your hands upon all those papers you want, I would die before you should know. No; I am smashed in the scrape, so is Apperton, and I should be worse than a fool to get old Maxwell clear, while his ruin is the only consolation I have for having been ruined myself."

"But surely," said Hanningham, "a vindictive feeling can have no place in your heart now. I admit, that if any possible advantage were derivable to yourself by this line of con-

duct, it would be perfectly excusable; but consider you are under the sentence of the law, a sentence which nothing can revoke except the exercise of the royal prerogative, which is not likely to be exerted in your favour. Why not release the unhappy victim of Apperton's duplicity from the peril, or at least the apprehension of peril, under which he is suffering?"

"Suffering!" cried Biddle; "what did he think of my suffering, when he insulted *me*? What did he think of Apperton's suffering, while he preached up about legitimacy, and honour, and family, and pride? He knew my brother had no right to stand up for family or legitimacy; but as long as he fancied he could make something out of him, never a word did he say about legitimacy. No; but the minute he found things had taken an ugly turn, this poor, proud doctor comes out with a long rigmarole about his family. Family indeed! he and I were born much alike, with no shoes to our feet; and deuced glad we both were, when we found a pair of pumps to fit. And it isn't because that old cold-blooded prig chose to put starch in his neckcloth, and eat dry toast for breakfast, that he is

to come domineering over me and my blood. No, no, grind him—grind him, is my advice; and wherever he is, the whole burthen of his bills, bonds, and liabilities, be upon him."

"I am sorry to see you so irritated, sir," said Hanningham. "I came as the harbinger of peace, at least I hoped so. I only asked as a favour, that you would relieve a mind already dreadfully agitated, from a load which he has no right to sustain."

"Relieve!" said Biddle. "Why should I relieve him? Here I am, sentenced to transportation—for what?—trying to save him, and bolster up his credit."

"Surely not Mr. Maxwell's credit," said Hanningham.

"Yes, Mr. Maxwell's credit," replied the other. "Didn't he bolt—abscond—toddle, as they say here? Well, what was to be done?—something—and Jack Apperton and I did it: and fourteen years transportation is the reward of my ingenuity. Why should I set Maxwell's mind at ease, if I could? No; you tell me where he is, and in four-and-twenty hours he shall be grinning through the bars of a prison, like a panther at Pidcock's. If I saw him rotting—perishing—perishing for want of food, I would

not give him the dirtiest crust I would give to a dog, to save him."

"I repeat," said Hanningham, "that I regret that such a spirit should animate you at this moment."

"You regret," said Biddle, "and pray, sir, if you come to that, who is it that I have the honour of talking to?—some sixty-fifth Scotch cousin of the Scotch surgeon, whose pedigree is as long as Queen Elizabeth's at Hatfield, or perhaps even longer, with a marginal note in the middle, 'about this time the world was created;' for old Bess only traces herself back to Adam."

"I, sir," said his companion, "have not the honour to be related at all to Mr. Maxwell, but I stand closely connected with him in the degree of friendship; I respect him, I esteem him, I love him; but I am not connected with him. My name, sir, is Hanningham."

"Hanningham," said Biddle, with a look of triumph; "Hanningham!—not related to the murderer—to the wretch who was hanged at Horsemonger Lane Jail—the fellow who shot his partner—no connexion of his, I suppose, sir."

"I have done," said Hanningham. "If the

sins of fathers are to be visited upon their children, it is not by mortal cruelty, nor by the insolence of so black-hearted a villain as yourself. I have never seen such hardened atrocity as you have been pleased to display in this interview; but the day will come when you will repent—at least I hope so. I shall not trouble you farther; but merely express my regret that you are so debased and so degraded, that I dare not vindicate the memory of an injured and misrepresented parent by a summary process, the nature of which I leave you to surmise."

Had poor Hanningham had the proper and reasonable controul of his feelings, he would not have condescended even to be angry with such a wretch as this convict; but there are moments when the most placid and best regulated amongst us, lose the equilibrium of temper, and descend almost to a level with their base and guilty antagonists, upon points like that upon which the convicted felon had dwelt.

Hanningham was so much excited, so dreadfully agitated at the recurrence to his unhappy father's fate, that it was with difficulty he could keep himself from fainting—and if he had not been suffered to go into one of the open yards, where the prisoners take exercise, he

would, in all probability, have sunk under the operation of his mingled feelings.

One of the turnkeys opened a door which gave him admission to one of those spaces, and he availed himself of the circumstance to inhale a little of the thick atmosphere of London —but it was with difficulty that he kept himself steady enough, to see what was passing round him.

He stood in the midst of convicts under sentence of death, but who had not yet been reported—yet even here he received kinder treatment and more sympathy from his companions, who saw that he was violently agitated, than he had experienced in his interview with the hardened villain Biddle—and what reflections flashed into his mind! He saw squalid misery—poor wretches manacled and allowed the benefit of air, merely to sustain life, until the law, which had declared it forfeit, should reach its maturity and take it; and oh! how were those feelings magnified, when he recollected that a parent whom he adored, and who, if he had not undergone the tedious preparation for death which those for minor crimes are permitted to suffer, had expiated a still greater atrocity in pursuance of a verdict given by a

jury, precisely as that had been delivered, by the force of which these manacled miscreants before him, had been doomed to die.

Pale, trembling, and dreadfully agitated, he looked round him, as the small modicum of air which finds admission into a highly walled yard of a prison, refreshed him, and he beheld the crowd of victims to offended justice, walking, laughing, and talking, as if they were either uncertain of their fate, or careless of the event. What a picture! To think that every one of those doomed to perish by the hands of the common executioner, had been nursed, and fondled, and loved, and praised to the very echo, by his fond father and doting mother—the pain, the perils, that his parents had undergone to rear him; the anxious watchings of his innocent slumbers; the affectionate kiss with which at night they had laid him to rest; the smile, the laugh,—his little playful efforts to speak—the joy that beamed in their eyes as he made progress, and could pronounce the endearing word, "father" or "mother"—and then to see the same beings hardened in guilt—the victims of vice—marks for the law's aim—retributive sacrifices upon the altar of offended justice. It was an awful sight, and with nerves attuned as Hanning-

ham's were—he whose father had expiated upon a scaffold the worst of crimes, and was perhaps almost the worst of murderers; it was not a scene in which it was likely he should regain health and strength.

As he sat on a stone bench and drank some water which the turnkey brought him, several of the culprits came round him—some with a confused idea of hope that he was another added to those already marked out for punishment; others because they thought his coming might be connected with some mitigation of their punishment; but amongst them, there was one, a short thick-set man, whose beard and whiskers were long and shaggy, whose eye rolled—"in a fine phrenzy," and who fixed his looks most intently upon the new comer. He inquired of the turnkey why the gentleman was there, and the turnkey explained that he was merely "an *amateur*."

"Do you know his name?" said the man.

"No," said the turnkey.

"I think *I* do," said the culprit; "and I should like to speak to him."

"As you think proper," said the turnkey.

The man walked up to the form where Hanningham was sitting, and placing his finger upon his lip, again scrutinized him with a degree of

interest far beyond the ordinary excitement of curiosity.

Hanningham felt uneasy at his situation, and rose from his seat to quit the yard—the short thick-set man followed him: he was near the gate—the man touched him—Hanningham turned.

"Your name is Hanningham," said the short thick-set man; "is it not?"

"It is," said Hanningham.

"Did you never see me before?" said the man; "or am I so altered that you have forgotten me?"

Still Hanningham did *not* recollect him.

"Do you remember Hall?" said the short thick-set man.

"Hall—my father's clerk!" said Hanningham, "to be sure I do."

"I am Hall," said he—and the moment he said so, Hanningham recollected him; but so changed, so altered, that he might have passed him in the streets a thousand times without having been recognized by him.

"What brought *you* here?" said Hanningham.

"Forgery, Mr. Hanningham," said Hall; "my die is cast, nothing can save me—there is

a good deal of delay in reporting convicts—but my fate is certain. Come this way a little. It must be Providence, and Providence alone, that sent you here. I never could, never should have had courage to do, what, please God, I *will* do, if I had not seen you—but what is to be, is——"

"What do you mean, Hall?" said Hanningham.

"Oh, mercy, mercy! Mr. Hanningham," said Hall, apparently agonized beyond the power of endurance. "If you knew; if you could suppose—half my villainy, you would strike me dead at your feet; but I am resolved upon my course—it shall be done. Yet, how dare I, how can I, look upon you, and recollect the dreadful, damning injury I have done you!"

"What injury?" said Hanningham.

"Your father—your father," said Hall—"died upon the scaffold—I—— oh, mercy on me!"

"Come, come," said the turnkey, "time's up, gentlemen, I must trouble you to go in."

The crowd of convicts obeyed the command, but Hall lingered.

"Come, Mr. Hall," said the man.

"I will," said he, "but this must not be the last meeting we have—I cannot die as it is—I must see you—I must tell you something—dreadful, most dreadful—but you shall hear it. It is all I can do; all the atonement I can make in this world. When will you come?"

"To-morrow," said Hanningham, "at the earliest hour permitted."

"To-morrow, let it be," replied Hall. "If the report goes up, I shall be ordered for execution.—Sha'n't I, Tom?" continued, he addressing the turnkey.

"Why let's hope for the best, Mr. Hall," said the turnkey—there's nothing unpossible to Providence, except gunpowder ashes; and you may be spared—but I don't think it likely—you are a deuced sight too clever to live."

"What a flattering fellow it is," said Hall, addressing himself to Hanningham—"well then, to-morrow at twelve."

"I will be punctual, rely upon it," said Hanningham.

"It will be a load of a million weight off my guilty heart," said Hall—"and you must hear it—you *shall* hear it. Good day, sir—I dare'n't look at you—but I say again, it was Providence sent you here, to confirm my

determination upon this point—now it must and shall be done. A man has but one neck, let the number of his crimes be what they may—good day, good day."

Saying which, the wretched man returned to his companions in guilt and misery, and Hanningham, heart-sick of the whole scene, got out of the prison as fast as he could, and repaired to the hotel where he had established himself and his fair lady on their first arrival in England.

CHAPTER VIII.

Now death draws near, a strange perplexity
Creeps coldly on me—like a fear to die.
Courage uncertain dangers may abate,
But who can bear th' approach of certain fate?
The wisest and the best some fear may show,
And wish to stay;—though they resolve to go.

DRYDEN.

THE remainder of the day, the beginning of which Hanningham had passed in the prison, hung heavily on hand, such was his desire to be informed upon the important matters which Hall declared he had to communicate; indeed, if the truth were told, even his anxiety with respect to Maxwell, and his indignation at the callous villainy of Biddle's conduct, yielded to his personal interest in the latter affair. His thoughts once glanced at the possibility of his father's innocence of crime, but how that could now be established, or if it were established,

of what avail it could be, except, indeed, as rescuing his memory from obloquy, it would be difficult to understand.

On this latter point, candid and communicative as he always was to the amiable woman whom his lucky stars had given him for a wife, he maintained a perfect silence; a proceeding which added very considerably to the difficulty of his position. She, who watched every turn of his countenance, and had learned to comprehend his very thoughts and feelings by its workings, was quite aware that he was agitated by something more than he had spoken of. The vagueness, however, of his suspicions and expectations with regard to the communication to be made by Hall, induced him to maintain a perfect silence on the subject.

It was evident that from Biddle he could gain no assistance in the unravelling of Maxwell's affairs, and he determined that he would make no farther attempts in a quarter where he had been repulsed in a manner which he could not brook; and whence, even if he could have submitted to the fellow's violence and insolence, it was quite clear no information that they could with any degree of certainty depend upon,

could be obtained. He wrote to Maxwell, and communicated to him the ill success of his mission, and his apprehension that, from the spirit of animosity which seemed to exist in the minds and tempers of Apperton's connexions, nothing but vexation and embarrassment were to be expected from the conduct they would pursue. He advocated in his letter the continuance of their concealment, at all events for some days; and having heard since his arrival of their discovery of Moss in the Isle of Wight, he felt assured that the inconvenience of restraint would be considerably alleviated by the presence of that eccentric personage, and was confident in Maxwell's perseverance in the cautious system which he had adopted.

The reader may, perhaps, recollect that when we last heard of Charles Somerford, he was on the point of proceeding to the West Indies with his regiment from Ireland. He had long since departed, and having done what was considered necessary for effecting the exchange he desired, had returned to his native country; not, however, without having suffered considerably by indisposition during his short stay in the island to which he was destined. His grief at finding, on his arrival in England, that his worst anti-

cipations with regard to Lady Emily Denham's health had been realized, and the feeling which he could not entirely overcome, that he had been, perhaps innocently, the cause of the melancholy event, seriously affected him. He made immediate inquiries where Lord Lessingham was residing; doubtful, however, whether the old nobleman would wish to see the individual who had sealed the fate of his beloved Lady Emily, by his decided adherence to a line of conduct which his lordship had before stigmatised as worse than foolish. Yet his gratitude for past kindness, and a thousand scarcely definable feelings, led him to desire once again to see the friend whose generous reception of him, and whose noble disinterestedness as regarded his lovely grandchild, had entirely gained his affection, and secured his eternal gratitude.

Charles was not long without information on this point. On his arrival in London, he found a letter awaiting him at the agent's, from the venerable peer, who had returned to his residence in the vicinity of London. Perhaps it may as well speak for itself, and give the reader an opportunity of judging the feelings by which it was dictated, and of imagining the consequences to which it might lead. It ran thus:—

Richmond, —— ——

"DEAR SOMERFORD;

"Your return to England, according to the accounts I have received of you, may be shortly expected. I look forward to it with anxiety and impatience. I have lost my treasure—the beloved of heart is gone!—my adored Emily is in heaven! and I am left a lone, wretched, childless, isolated being! I cannot endure society; I cannot gain courage sufficient to mingle with the world, and I feel too surely that I shall sink under the weight of my afflictions.

"To your return I look forward as the only event likely to afford me consolation—your presence is absolutely necessary to my comfort and the repose of my mind. At first, the association of ideas which cannot fail to connect you in my mind with the angel who is gone, will be painful—bitterly painful; but that will subside, and I shall feel calmed and soothed in the society of one who was so dear to her.

"I am the more anxious that you should receive this letter as soon as you reach London, because I apprehend that the anxiety I felt upon the great object of my life, when we discussed it together, might have induced me to

drop some expressions with respect to your self-devotion to the object of your first love, of a much harsher character than your conduct in that affair warranted or justified. You have behaved nobly; and although I am doomed to suffer deeply for the strength of your resolution, I cannot but admire the steadiness of principle which actuated your behaviour. I spoke harshly of your friends, the Maxwells: they do not deserve it, and I gladly retract anything that might have given you uneasiness upon that point. I lamented the consequences of your decision, and was actuated in the strongest manner possible to endeavour to shake it. I believe Mrs. Apperton to be a lady of the most amiable disposition; and although I cannot altogether comprehend the strong measures which Maxwell adopted to separate you and his daughter, nor entirely admit the judiciousness, on her part, of accepting another suitor, still there are allowances to be made. You were poor and unknown, and the circumstance connected with the birth of your mother, although of course wholly uncontrollable by you, operated on his mind, not to your disadvantage, but, as parents habitually see in their children qualities which eyes less intimate

with their merits do not always perceive, he anticipated for *her*, rank and fortune, which, whatever might be your eventual success, it was extremely improbable you could give her, until you had passed the period of life at which her marriage would be desirable.

"I am now arguing favourably upon points which I considered differently before, in order to show you that I am ready to admit my error, and anxious to meet you with no apprehension on your part of hostility on mine to the line you have taken with regard to your vow of constancy. Come to me, then, as soon as you arrive; you will find my house, my heart, open to receive you. The chief ornament of my domestic circle is gone—the dear, good child of my old age is no longer with me. Soon, very soon, shall I follow her from this troublesome world, with which, and all its follies and vanities, I have done for ever: peaceful retirement is all my aim and object. To you I look as the prop of my declining years; and I invite you to my solitude, not to share it against your will, but to be to me as a son, during the short remaining period of my existence.

"To the world this might seem romantic, and the satisfaction I anticipate in your society

as the beloved of my poor Emily, equivocal. But no; her affections have formed a link between us which I cannot break; and I shall find myself doing honour to her memory, and showing my attachment to her, by forwarding your views and your interests, and proving myself, as I really am,

"Your devoted friend,

"LESSINGHAM."

There could be no question as to the conduct Charles was to pursue, upon the receipt of this extraordinarily kind lettter; indeed, he found from the date of it, that it had been some time awaiting him at the agent's office, and heard, moreover, that since its dispatch Lord Lessingham had been extremely ill, and was actually at that moment confined to his bed. Not an hour was to be lost in replying to such a bidding, by a personal visit to his lordship; and accordingly, having as speedily as possible made the necessary arrangements for his proceeding to Richmond, our returned soldier repaired to the presence of his kind and generous, although somewhat eccentric, patron and friend.

He found Lord Lessingham not in bed, but stretched on a couch—so changed in the short

time which had elapsed since they last met, that it was with difficulty he could trace the noble expression of his countenance in the pale and withered face before him.

The old nobleman's emotions, when Charles was first announced, were painful beyond expression; he sobbed aloud, and the tears chased each other down his furrowed cheek. "I knew," said he, "this would be a dreadful trial. Thank God you are come, Charles!—Charles, I have lost her—she is gone from me—there, there, see her books—her work—all as they used to be—but she is in her grave!"

"Pray endeavour to compose yourself, my lord," said Charles.

"No, no," said Lord Lessingham; "I am too weak to struggle with my feelings; let them have way—I shall be better soon. Poor child! —See, Charles," continued the old man, "see here, her favourite dog knows you—fawns on you—welcomes you—*he* has not forgotten you! Oh, Charles Somerford! it was a sad trial for an old man—to lose so kind, so dear, so fond a being as she was—but God's will be done!"

"Shall I leave you for a little, my lord?" said Charles; who was apprehensive of danger

from the violence of his noble host's agitation.

"No, no; sit you down," said Lord Lessingham; "we will talk all this over calmly and reasonably by-and-bye. Human weakness must be forgiven. Tell me, when did you arrive in London?"

"This morning," said Somerford; "scarcely two hours since. The moment I found your lordship's letter, I hastened to acknowledge it in person."

"And you accept my proposition," said his lordship; "you will consent to make this your home, while you remain in town or its vicinity?"

"I can make but one reply," said Charles, "to so much kindness."

"I cannot endure society," said Lord Lessingham. "Time, they say, softens sorrows, and wears down afflictions; but at present I seek only the company of one who knew her well, and who will talk of her with me. I see nobody who calls, and I have looked forward to the day of your return, as the only point at which a hope of consolation could be afforded me."

"Now," said Somerford, "that I have gone

on the half-pay, my military duties will not, at all events for the present, interfere with the scheme of comfort which your lordship proposes."

"Your military duties,"—said Lord Lessingham; "of those I think very little. You may, I think, retire altogether from the army, unless the external distinctions of a soldier have any charms for you."

"I have no other profession, my lord," said Somerford; "my sword is all I have to live by."

"Promises are sometimes thoughtlessly made," said Lord Lessingham, "and heartlessly broken. Here we cannot controul the things most essential to our happiness; but, as far as worldly concerns go, it may be as well to tell you, that your fortune will need no professional aid to ensure your competence and affluence for the future."

"My lord," said Charles, "how have I deserved this splendid liberality ?—it is impossible I should consent——"

"The time will come, Somerford," said Lord Lessingham, "and that shortly, when I shall, I hope, be able to induce you to obey my wishes on that point without hesitation. I

stand alone in the world, the last of my race—my title extinct at my death, but my fortune is at my disposal. I am not strong enough now to go into details, which I intend you shall hear; but to-morrow, perhaps—soon it must be, or never—I will open all my plans for your future advancement to you. At present, my head throbs, and I am unable to talk farther upon a subject which so deeply interests me."

Somerford saw but too plainly that Lord Lessingham was indeed too weak to pursue the subject on which he had touched; but his astonishment at what he had already heard was extremely great. It seemed to him one of the most extraordinary turns in fortune that ever had occurred: the first friendship and affection which his lordship had exhibited towards him, were gratifying in the highest degree, and appeared very extraordinary; but when, after offering him such a treasure as his adored grandchild—after his proposal had been rejected—after the fatal consequence which had ensued, and which it was evident the venerable nobleman, by implication at least, attributed to Somerford's disinclination to accept the proffered hand and fortune of Lady Emily and when, after having expostulated in no very gentle

terms with him upon his conduct, in adhering to his self-imposed obligation of fidelity to Mrs. Apperton, they had parted as if they were never more to meet—he found himself cordially and earnestly invited to the house which he had voluntarily quitted, and selected by its noble master, not only as his companion and friend, but, as it should seem, the future possessor of much of his fortune—it seemed little short of a miracle. Medical men, or commissioners of lunacy, would perhaps have had their ideas drawn into some other channel, and have arrived at some more worldly and physical conclusion. As it was, Charles had only to wonder and be grateful; for what he had just heard, made him recur to Katharine and her charms, with a solid satisfaction perfectly new to him. If she were released from her unhappy thraldom, he would be able to give her such an establishment as might secure her comfort, and render her father free from difficulties and embarrassments, and restore him to his former place in society.

These things were all in progress, while the Maxwells, unconscious of them, had been wearing down the days of their exile in Madeira, and on the voyage homewards, *via* Fayal: and

although parted still farther by circumstances than space or distance, not a day passed—scarcely an hour—without the mind of either of these devoted individuals being filled with the thoughts of the other. Katharine, it must be admitted, looked forward to the future with less hopes of happiness than Charles—she did not know how solemnly he had bound himself to her by a compact to which, as he had told Lord Lessingham, she was no party. She fancied she saw him surrounded by gaieties, involved in dissipation, and tempted into society, where his manners and accomplishments could not fail to have their influence, and in which it was most likely he would form some matrimonial engagement; for she felt that she deserved to lose him, and expected fully to meet her reward.

Little did she think how much more dangerous his position actually had been than she anticipated. The heartless frivolity of the gay saloon, the scuffling of the waltz, the clatter of the gallope, or the kickings of the Mazurka, with all the allurements of beauty and dress in full display, are not a thousandth part so perilous to constancy, as the retired quietude of shady walks and moonlight groves, in the company of one dear individual. All Somerford's

firmness had been required to withstand the influence of the lovely syren with whom he had been so long and so intimately associated; but principle had triumphed, and his fidelity came from the ordeal purer and brighter than ever.

When they returned to England, Kate, as I have already said, perhaps needlessly, was most anxious to hear some intelligence of him; but the arrears of newspapers since their last accounts, were too voluminous to wade through, in the hope of seeing anything about him; and she was fearful of asking Moss, lest she should incur a fire of jokes and banters upon her smouldering passion. At length, however, she contrived to induce her father to lead the conversation in that direction,

"What's gone with the cretur?" said Moss, "why, he is gone to the West Indies—that's the last I heard of him: got into some love scrape at Cheltenham with a lord's granddaughter, and his lordship took the liberty of showing him the door—bowed him out. Master Charley did not know that in marriage as well as in murder, blood will have blood, and so he thought to carry off my lady and a fortune; but the cretur was well served, and turned off without a character."

"Are you sure," said Katharine, "that your's is the true version of that history."

"I don't know how true it is," said Moss, "I heard it from somebody, I forget where, that knew I knew something of the cretur; and that's what they told me, and that he was forced to set off and look after the nigger boys, with the woolly heads, in consequence."

"And natural enough, too," said Maxwell; "Somerford has no pretensions to such a connexion, and I must say it smatters a little of vanity his attempting to form it."

"But do you believe he did, sir?" said Kate.

"Why should people invent such stories?" said Maxwell.

"I for one, discredit it," said Katharine.

"To be sure you do," said Moss.

"If you loves I as I loves you,
No knife shall cut our love in two"—

"eh! — Kittums! don't you fancy yourself sure of his heart?"

"Whose heart?" said Maxwell; "what has Kate to do with anybody's heart—has not she a husband."

"Thanks to you, Master Mack, she has," said

Moss, "and a nice bargain she has got of him."

"On that point, Moss, pray let us have no discussion," said Maxwell; "what I did, I did for the best. We are blind, fallible creatures, and I was deceived; but the ruin of my fortune and my respectability, has gone hand in hand with the wreck of her happiness, and so however much I may reproach myself, I do not escape with impunity for my credulity."

"You have nothing to reproach yourself with, my dearest father," said Katharine; "the choice was my own, and I was quite old enough to decide for myself, and quite competent, if I had wished it, to refuse Apperton. I did not do so; and whatever the consequences have been, you, as well as myself, are innocent of them; and so let us endeavour to avoid all discussion of a subject to which it is worse than useless to recur."

It was after this conversation had taken place that Maxwell received the letter from Hanningham, describing the interview which he had had in prison with Biddle, and expressive of his apprehensions, too well founded, that no aid or assistance in their embarrassments was to be expected from that source. The subsequent con-

versation he had had with the *ci-devant* clerk of his father, Hanningham did not mention—his anxiety and expectation had been so powerfully excited, by the address and manner of the culprit, that he dared scarcely trust himself with thinking on the subject, lest he should be led into some expression of his feeling, which might betray the extent of his hopes and wishes upon the point—but certain it is, that hours never passed so slowly with him, as those which intervened between two o'clock of one day and twelve o'clock of the next.

At length, however, the moment arrived for his interview with Hall; and as he paced the streets towards the prison where he was confined, Hanningham was scarcely conscious of the act of walking—his heart beating with hope and expectation.

He arrived—was admitted—but when Hall met him, it seemed that some change had taken place in his intentions since they had parted—he appeared gloomy—almost sulky, and by no means communicative.

"Well, Mr. Hall," said Hanningham, "I am here to fulfil our engagement of yesterday."

"I see, sir," said Hall, "but I have been

thinking, since you was here yesterday, that in the present state of my circumstances, I might do myself a serious injury by what I proposed to say, without doing you any good. While there's life there is hope, Mr. Hanningham: if I put my design into execution, there will be no hope for *me*. I am guilty of the worst of crimes—confessing it would, I know, ease my heart of a great load; but if I should escape for what I am now here for, I should be foolish to entail upon myself a capital punishment for an act, of which I am not even suspected."

"I assure you," said Hanningham, "that I have no wish to persuade you to commit or criminate yourself. I came by your own invitation and at your own desire; but if you have altered your mind, and think, upon reconsideration, that it is more prudent to maintain silence, I have done."

"I would give the world," said Hall, "to tell you all—I should be happier: for though I can make no atonement for my guilt, I might make *you* comparatively happy. Come this way," continued he; "here we cannot well be overheard. Oh! Mr. Hanningham, when I look at you, my heart bleeds, villain as I am."

"Calm yourself," said Hanningham.

"I am calm," said Hall; "I am resolved—you shall know all—you ought to know all: but make me a promise. What I shall tell you will do you no farther good, than that of clearing the reputation of a beloved relative—therefore pledge your honour to me—I ask no more. I knew your father well—too well—too well! I require no other security from a son of his, than his word—pledge your word of honour that you will not reveal what I shall declare to you, until I am dead, or at least so surely doomed to die, that my life cannot be affected by my confession."

"I pledge my honour, that I will never divulge the secret you confide in me," said Hanningham, "until you are dead, or that I am absolved from my promise by yourself."

"That's enough," said Hall—"quite enough—but now—now how shall I have courage to tell you—how shall I dare to incur your hatred, your curses, your bitterest curses, too well deserved by me. Oh! Mr. Hanningham, the progress of crime, the march of villainy, is so sure and certain, that the moment the strait path is quitted, the man is lost—play and its allurements, gaieties and frivolities, a love of what is miscalled pleasure—dissipation and liberti-

nism—these have been my ruin—these have brought me here—these made me—a murderer!"

"Murderer!" said Hanningham, his blood curdling as the word passed his lips.

"A murderer—twice a blood-stained murderer!" said Hall, clenching his first and striking his forehead forcibly. "Listen, and hear me unburthen my black and guilty heart—hear my confession—your father was my father's friend—took me into his house, and brought me forward in his business—his confidence in me was unbounded, and I betrayed that confidence, and never was suspected—he took a partner as you know—Vernon."

"Vernon!" replied Hanningham—"too well, too painfully I know that name."

"Vernon I hated," said Hall; "he suspected me too justly; the books which I kept were falsified; he discovered the errors I had wilfully made to cover my depredations—your poor father, your excellent father, supported me against his allegations. I became the constant subject of contention. I was the primary cause of the feuds which disturbed them, until Vernon accused your father, and implied, if he did not actually declare his belief, that he was in league with me to dupe and defraud him. This

brought matters to an issue: the consequences I knew would be an immediate and close investigation of the affairs of the firm. One mode of avoiding disgrace and ruin only seemed to present itself; and I resolved upon the commission of a new crime, to escape detection of those of which I had already been guilty. I had no time for deliberation; I looked no farther forward than the moment—I anticipated no consequences, expected no results such as, to my eternal anguish, followed. I—I—it was, Hanningham, that shot Vernon."

"You!" exclaimed Hanningham, "you!"

"I—I!" said Hall: "this hand—this blood-stained hand did it—but what of *that?* Vernon I hated—I was revenged—I am a murderer!—but I killed my victim; and when I saw him fall headlong from the chaise in which he was travelling with your father, I felt a thrill of sanguinary joy and satisfaction at the success of my enterprize."

"But my father!" said Hanningham.

"Aye!" said Hall, "there it is; there is the rankling, galling torture of my heart; that good, that excellent man, my patron, my friend, my more than friend, my second parent, perished for me and my sins—died on a scaffold

amidst the execrations of the people; and I lived on, to act new scenes of vice and villainy, and to prove the justice of the adage, that foul deeds will rise, and blood will have blood."

"Mercy on me," said Hanningham, do I live to hear this—can this be so?"

"That it is true," said Hall, "you can have little doubt. I have written down a full confession of all this, which I meant to have left behind me at my death; but when I saw you, a feeling I could not check, an impulse that I could not controul, compelled me to unburthen my heart to you; to you the innocent sufferer of my crime—to you, the son of the man I loved—of the man I murdered."

"But how," said Hanningham, who could scarcely speak or stand, such was his agitation; "how came it that my father's pistol was the weapon by which his partner fell."

"That was my cunning—my contrivance," said Hall; "a contrivance the full extent of the mischief arising from which, I did not thoroughly consider. The pistols were placed in the chaise by the groom as usual—I was by—the night was dark—I had formed my plan. I took these pistols from the chaise, in order at once to arm

myself for the bloody deed I meditated, and to leave those against whom my arm was to be raised, harmless—thus I secured a double object. Your father, assured of the regularity of his favourite servant, never inquired about the weapons, but drove off, convinced they were in their accustomed place. I had mounted my horse —I rode to the spot, which a few days before— on the Sunday too, which I had been spending at your hospitable home—I had selected for the perpetration of the act. Arrived there, I tied my horse to a tree, and waited the coming of my victim, for I sought but one. Vernon and your father were quarrelling still. My misdeeds the object, in all probability, of the altercation and your father's vindication. I ran behind the chaise, and unobserved, raised myself at the back of it, levelled the pistol at Vernon's head, drew the trigger—and he fell lifeless in an instant on the road—the horse flew forward, alarmed at the noise, and I threw from me the weapon I had so effectually used, and ran to my horse—in my progress thither, I cast away the other pistol, which, with its fellow, formed the damning evidence against the innocent."

"And could you bear to hear my father's guilt proclaimed?" said Hanningham. "Could

you endure to hear that he died for your crimes?"

"Yes, Hanningham," said Hall; "self-love—the love of life—the dread of punishment—the fear of death—all, conspired to keep me silent, when I heard him doomed to expiate my villainy. Oh! would to heaven I had then done what now I do uselessly! I should have saved an honest man, and I should have saved myself the commission of crimes at which even *I* shudder—I—a murderer!—but stay, stay—what is it?—what's the matter, Hanningham?—speak!"

The appeal was useless; Hanningham, overcome by his contending feelings, had fallen backwards on the stone bench where he was sitting, senseless.

"What have I done!" said Hall; "more blood upon my guilty head. Here, here!—help, help!"

His cries soon brought assistance; and some water being procured, Hanningham was shortly recovered and restored to consciousness.

"What was it, sir," said the turnkey, who had been assisting him—"the heat?"

"No," said Hanningham; "it was——"

"Yes, yes," said Hall, interrupting him;

"it was the heat, or the—the gentleman is subject to fits."

"Yes," said Hanningham, seeing immediately that Hall was desirous that nothing more should be said which was likely to tend to a discovery of the real cause of his agitation; "they are very dreadful sometimes. I am better now—I am well, quite well."

The turnkey quitted them again, looking very significantly, and implying by the expression of his countenance, that he did not quite believe that the agitation in which he found Hanningham was entirely constitutional.

"What wonders Providence works!" said Hanningham; "that I should have come to this place for a purpose so different, and should here meet with one whose confession makes me the happiest being on earth."

"It *would* make me happy," said Hall, "if my confession could restore your poor father to you. The day of his execution will never be forgotten by me—the very elements seemed to suit themselves to the occasion. He might have suffered pangs, as he suffered disgrace; but I defy the power of nature to bear greater torments than I endured during the hour in which I knew he was paying the forfeit of my

infamy. Where were you on that day?" said Hall.

"I was out of England," said Hanningham; "I have but recently returned—"

"And your poor sister, sir," said Hall; "where is she?—with you?"

"No, not at present," said Hanningham; "she is in the country."

"Ah!" added the culprit, with a look of inexpressible anguish; "it seems but the other day that I was admitted into her society—a guest, a welcome guest, at her father's house. Now, sentenced to the same punishment which my guilt entailed upon *him*. Step by step I went on in vice; and having my hands embued in blood, all other crimes seemed light to me: and here I am, deserted by the friends who lived on the produce of my villainy—despised and rejected even by my associates in guilt!"

"Your own reflections," said Hanningham, "must be the bitterest monitors."

"Yes," replied Hall. "Death will be a relief to me; and yet, as usual, I cling to life. You are now in possession of the great secret which would end all doubt of my fate, and bring my dreadful career to a certain termination. Yet

I have bound you (I scarce know why) not to divulge it."

"On that you may rely," said Hanningham, "until I have your permission it passes not my lips. Did you not tell me you had written a confession to the same effect?"

"I did," said Hall; "and *that* you shall possess, to make what use you please of, under the same conditions. If I am ordered to die, you will see the account of the recorder's report; and when that is made, come to me, and you shall have it; and if that is not enough to satisfy other people, bring whom you please, and I 'll be as good as my word and repeat to them all the circumstances I have told to you."

"You will do me the greatest service," said Hanningham; "you will clear the reputation of an injured man, and by so doing counterbalance, in some degree, the crimes you have by your own admission committed."

"I have a long account of guilt to pay for," said Hall; "but of all the things that weigh upon my mind at this time, the wrongful death of your poor father is the one that lies heaviest and nearest my heart. As for Vernon, if he were alive again—again I could——"

What he was about to declare, it matters

not: the dinner-hour for the prisoners had arrived, and he amongst the rest was summoned to the meal. He parted from Hanningham with a look, the expression of which was riveted upon his mind, nor could he for the rest of day drive it from his memory. What Hanningham's feelings were, it would be difficult to describe; for beyond the delight which the exculpation of his much-calumniated father's character, he had another trying feeling to struggle with—he was bound to divulge that exculpation to no human being, until he had the permission of the wretched being whose life might depend upon his adherence to his promise.

His wife—might he not tell *her*?—not even his wife? No; he felt himself so solemnly pledged, that for the first time since his marriage, he was compelled to keep from her, not only a secret, but a secret the knowledge of which he knew would be productive of real happiness to her.

His proceedings consequent upon the discovery, were therefore all covert and mysterious. He wrote various letters, and was much occupied in making certain arrangements; but what the contents of those letters were, or to whom they were addressed, his wife knew not. She

was piqued at his reserve; but satisfied, when he told her that mystification was, for the present, absolutely necessary, and that in due time she should be put in possession of every point of the story, which for a short period he was bound to conceal.

Hanningham, however, could not conceal the happiness which he had derived from the whole circumstance; and when he recollected the extraordinary chance, as some would call it, that brought him in contact with Hall, he, who considered their meeting the result of something more than accident, returned thanks to Heaven for the providential interference to rescue the memory of his beloved father from opprobrium, and restore a sister, who had shrunk into obscurity and retirement, in consequence of the fatal disgrace which had fallen upon her house, to her proper place and station in society.

How long he was compelled to keep the secret, and what the results of its eventual disclosure were, time will perhaps show.

CHAPTER IX.

"I saw no king, no man; save one poor wretch,
Who, sick in bed, lay gasping for his breath:
His eyes, like dying lamps, sunk in their sockets,
Now glared and now drew back their feeble light;
Faintly his speech fell from his fault'ring tongue
In interrupted accents, as he strove
With the strong agonies that shook his limbs,
And writhed his tortured features into forms
Hideous to sight."

BELLERS.

THE intelligence which Hanningham had been able to collect for the Maxwells, was anything but satisfactory or consolatory; and although Apperton's connexions were people of no importance, still their decided hostility was anything but agreeable. A low mind, actuated by revenge for a supposed insult—for no people are so proud as those who have the smallest pretensions to be so—never can subside into inaction; and the very fact, that one of her sons was to suffer one of the principal punishments which the law awards, on account, as they seemed to think, of his connexion with old

Maxwell's affairs, would of itself suffice to keep up the animosity of the whole family, in every shape and way in which it might be brought to bear upon Maxwell's relations.

Hanningham, by Maxwell's direction, visited his old residence in Burlington-gardens, which he found occupied by a family, to whom Hanningham introduced himself; and from the head of it, he discovered that he had purchased the lease and furniture of Apperton—a discovery which, though apparently of no great importance in itself, was valuable, inasmuch as it proved that whatever the claims might have been upon Maxwell, which had rendered that property (small as it was relatively to the whole) liable to seizure, they had been satisfied, and that the house and furniture had returned into Apperton's power and possession. It was a professional man who occupied it, and Hanningham could not but regard the different apartments through which he passed with an interest which, those who did not know the inmost workings of his mind, could neither have understood or appreciated.

Hanningham then proposed publishing an advertisement, calling upon Maxwell's creditors to come forward with their claims, in order to ascertain the amount of debts, and the disposi-

tion of the persons to whom they might be due; a measure which seemed very prudent, inasmuch as Maxwell himself could give no account whatever of the details of his transactions with his son-in-law. His description of the course of conduct which had been pursued was most extraordinary, and scarcely credible to those who do not know that men of first-rate skill and ability in their own peculiar professions, are mostly ignorant of the commonest details of others.

Maxwell explained to Hanningham that Apperton upon occasions when, as he told him, opportunities occurred by which he might suddenly and extensively increase his capital, would suggest his selling out sums to certain amounts, and buying with the proceeds of such sale shares in the bubble companies which eventually ruined them; that to the amount of seventy or eighty thousand pounds, he had thus parted with his capital, blindly confiding in Apperton's judgment, and firmly relying upon his honour and integrity: indeed, upon the latter points he never had any doubts to the very last; and when he found himself hurried away from England by the fear of arrest and imprisonment, he felt fully assured

that the advice of Apperton was the best, and that no suggestion could be made to benefit his condition, if Apperton was unable to make it.

The other incumbrances,—for the incumbrance of property was gone,—arose, as the old gentleman described it, from acceptances and bonds, which Apperton advised him to give at such periods as he told him great inconvenience or loss would arise from transferring his property from the funds to other purposes; and these he explained to him, were to be cleared off when the objections to selling out, were obviated, supposing that before such period the different speculations in which they were engaged, should not have themselves afforded the means of settling them; and thus, besides the actual loss of all his earnings, he had become responsible to a large amount—but how large, no recollection of his, could serve him to state. It was true, he had kept a book in which he set down these engagements; but that, which he left in London when he started for Brighton, had never reached him, if it had been secured amongst his private property.

Hanningham, it must be confessed, was more struck by the circumstance of the house hav-

ing reverted to Apperton, than by anything which had yet occurred; and he resolved upon putting his plan of calling the outstanding creditors together, in execution, in order not only to ascertain what amount of debt still remained unliquidated, but what particular debtors had been satisfied by the proceeds of the sale of the property which the tenant of the town-house in Burlington Gardens had actually purchased of Apperton himself; and accordingly an advertisement was inserted in the newspapers, couched in the usual terms, inviting Maxwell's creditors to come forward, or send an account of their claims against him, to Hanningham's solicitor in Lincoln's Inn.

It is impossible to describe the state of Hanningham's mind during the fortnight or three weeks allotted for the purpose of producing these demands. The Maxwells were, of course, kept in a state of the most feverish suspense; and he, who ought to have been their active agent and indefatigable man of business, was so completely overcome by the intelligence he had received from Hall in the prison, that his wife, who saw how much he was perplexed and absorbed, began to feel serious alarm, lest something, yet unknown to her, had affected him, not wholly

disconnected with the subject of Hall's communication, but bearing upon circumstances and events in a totally different manner.

One person presented himself at the solicitor's shortly after the advertisement summoning the creditors appeared in the newspapers; and although no creditor herself, it proved to be a very important person in the way of affording evidence and throwing a light upon the nature of Apperton's transactions subsequently to the departure of Maxwell; this was no other than Mrs. Dawes, whom the reader may remember as in attendance upon the fugitive family at Portsmouth, and who quitted them when they departed for their exile, only because her age and infirmities kept her at home.

From her description of what had occurred upon her return to London, when she found the sheriffs' officers out of the house in Burlington Gardens, and Apperton established in it, it was quite evident that the execution from its rapid progress and its sudden announcement, must have been in point of fact wholly unnecessary; and the moment that was so far ascertained as Dawes's narrative could substantiate it, a thousand suggestions presented themselves as to the motive which could have induced the abrupt commu-

nication of the event, coupled with the unqualified order for their embarkation and flight.

Connected with these circumstances, was the extraordinary attention which prompted Apperton, at a time when he must have been as one would have thought, wholly occupied with affairs actually going on in London, to prepare every accommodation for their departure, and every facility for their escape. At all events, the combination conjured up suspicions in Hanningham's mind, that the object of Mr. Apperton, was rather to frighten away his timid victim than to make the best of what he must have found a bad bargain.

In short, the man of business to whom the advertisement referred the creditors, thought he had found a clue to the unravelment of a great deal which appeared mysterious; and though Hanningham's visit to Biddle in prison had been unavailing, the lawyer fancied that he could insinuate himself like a corkscrew into the mind of the convict, and draw forth *secundum artem* the whole of its contents. What the learned gentleman's skill might have done, or what effect his very specious manner might have produced, it is now impossible to say; for the promising youth, whose conduct at Brighton, had so much

prepossessed the Maxwells in his favour, was, when the said attorney inquired after him in Newgate, several days distance on his voyage to that vast land, which, in some few years, will emulate the largest republic extant, and become, like her, a nation of saints and sages, patriots and philosophers—namely, New South Wales.

This channel, from which, to say truth, Hanningham in spite of the sanguine expectations of his legal friend, anticipated little enlightenment, was therefore cut off; and the only chance left, was in an application to the respectable mother of all the Biddles; but to this measure, Hanningham strongly opposed himself, as tending only to circulate the existence of doubts, which it did not seem the least probable, that any of the parties would feel inclined to clear up or satisfy.

The first step was to send Dawes down to her ancient master and mistress, who received her at Ryde, with all the welcome that kind hearts appreciating faithful services are likely to feel and exhibit. It was a great consolation to Kate to have her with them, and something like a balm to her wounded spirit, to talk over days that were past; although the account Moss had heard and retailed to her, concerning Somerford's invasion of a noble family, and conse-

quent expulsion therefrom, hindered her from conversing with satisfaction upon the only topic that she loved to dwell upon.

Three weeks elapsed after the insertion of the advertisement, which was the period specified for the production of claims, and no persons appeared to prefer any, except two or three of the minor tradesmen in the neighbourhod of Maxwell's late residence, who were forthwith satisfied; and after this ordeal of his credit, Maxwell began to think he might venture to the metropolis; but Moss, who though not much versed in the low ways of small lawyers, had a perfect knowledge of mankind, suggested his remaining snug where he was, for some time longer; hinting his belief that the demands had been only postponed until he should show himself, so that his enemies might pounce upon him as soon as he came within their reach. Moss being to this advice most specially moved, not more by the anxiety he felt for the security of his friends than by the comfort he himself experienced during their stay at Melrose Cottage.

But what, all this time, was Edward Maxwell doing at Funchal? What were his sensations, what his anxiety, after the excitement which the discovery of the picture of his beloved Ma-

ria had created? No place remained unsearched, no person unquestioned, as to the history of this mysterious portrait; but all his inquiries were vain, and all the answers he obtained unsatisfactory.

Often and often did he watch the coming vessels, whose broad bows dashing up the foaming wave, he expected to bring a reply to his letters to Hanningham on this subject, which letters scarcely could have reached their destination; and hour after hour did he sit gazing upon the lineaments of her he loved, till he wept with anxiety and disappointment. Hanningham, however, was too deeply interested in matters, to him of vital importance in England, to pay such prompt obedience to Ned's importunate demands upon the subject, as lovers are apt to expect; and lucky it was for the junior partner of the house that something was to occur to relieve the sameness of his occupation and vary a little the monotony of his existence: but so it was, and for a short time, at all events, his thoughts were drawn into a channel widely different from that, in which they had been running, since his discovery of the picture.

One fine evening, a ship called the Jonadab Brown, 580 tons, of New York, Amos Frank-

lin, master, arrived in Funchal roads, and let go her anchor in four fathom water. She was bound to Funchal for wine—it should be known that Madeira is the popular beverage in the United States; the pure and patriotic members of which, boil it, and ice it, and shake it, and fine it, and do every sort of thing to it, before they drink it, and so superior do they reckon their mode of treatment to that which the said wine meets with, any where else, that they absolutely look with contempt upon any Madeira but their own.

The "Jonadab Brown" was a noble looking merchantman, brown sides, taunt masts, square yards, a sharp bow and a clean counter. No sooner were her stars and stripes seen floating in the evening breeze, than every wine merchant's heart beat with expectation; glasses were levelled at her from every eminence, in order to make out her private signal, and the Alfandegah was besieged in order to ascertain whence she came and whither she was bound.

A short time only elapsed before Maxwell had the good fortune to discover that she was chartered by a connexion of theirs, at New York, and brought a large order to their house. This was the first very extensive shipment he had

made since he had been left in administration, and he went assiduously to work, in order to prove to his partner not only his anxiety to do his duty, but his judgment in doing it scientifically.

It would have surprised the idle friends of his earlier days, or even his less dazzling companions in Mr. Diveandpore's shady chambers in Stone Buildings, to have seen the active junior partner of the Madeira house, fagging about the pebbly streets of Funchal in a straw hat and buff leather shoes, superintending and marking, or causing to be marked, with the peculiar brand of the firm, the various pipes and hogsheads of London Particular, and the smaller casks of Certial Tinta and Malavisa, with a book in his hand and a pen behind his ear. His assiduity and attention not only conferred a great degree of satisfaction on himself, but attracted the marked and "partiklar" attention of Captain Amos Franklin, who having twice, to use the captain's own expression, "tucked his trotters under Maxwell's mahogany," invited his host to "crack a biscuit" aboard the Jonadab Brown; an invitation which Maxwell was extremely well pleased to accept, because independently of the pleasure which to

an unaccustomed eye, is derivable, from looking over a fine vessel, such as the American first class ships of every denomination are, he would have an opportunity of seeing how they were stowing away the wine; about which, if he did not actually understand very much, it was part of his duty to affect that he did; and accordingly, Captain Amos Franklin, having had his gig backed in, to receive the merchant, they proceeded "somewhere about eight bells, I calkilate," to the beautiful "clipper" lying at anchor in the roads.

The repast was hospitably spread, and well served. Tarapin soup, (a decoction of tortoise flesh,) and canvas-back ducks formed the novelties of the board, and Maxwell did honour to them, although at the expense of his natural feelings. The wine was beyond praise—it was furnished by himself—and the punch, which the steward made after dinner, to wet the cigars, was nectarious. The Captain dilated with considerable energy upon the merits of his tobacco, which was pure native Virginia, and which he declared was unquestionably the finest in the whole world, whether for smoking or chewing; an opinion in which, he said, he was supported by all the *ladies* and gentlemen of his acquaintance.

Captain Amos Franklin, after dinner, descanted somewhat at large upon the advantageous state of the "Union;" described the absence of pomp in the President's levees and drawing-rooms, the paucity of his wants, and the scantiness of the means of gratifying his wishes; and concluded a lengthened eulogium upon the state of society, and the freedom of representation, by stating that the qualification for an elector in America was having paid taxes, or worked upon the roads.

This strange definition of right to electoral privileges startled Maxwell, who proceeded to question his friend, and received such extraordinary information on American statistics, that I deeply lament that neither the space I have left to conclude my history, nor the nature of the history itself, will permit my having the pleasure of repeating all the discoveries he made: the conclusion to which he came, however, was, that there is no pride so overweening as that, which apes humility, and that, as the march of intellect goes on, in the vast community of which Amos Franklin was a worthy member, the wants and wishes of the people will "progress," and that in less than another century, the immense republic of the present day, must and will inevitably

fall under the dominion of a constitutional monarchy.

"Captain Franklin," said somebody, entering the Captain's cabin, "that man is worse this evening—much worse."

"So I guessed he would be," said the Captain—"light-headed?"

"No," said the Doctor, "calm, but weaker; gradually sinking I reckon; he's tremenduous bad, I calkilate."

"An invalid?" said Maxwell.

"No," said Franklin, "a sick man we have got aboard—he's working his way here afore the mast, but has seen better days, I consider. He's an Englishman; but seems slick out of his element at sea."

"He has been talking," said Mr. Slaughter, (so was the ship's surgeon called,) "about Mr. Maxwell, the merchant here."

"Of *me*?" said Maxwell.

"I ask your pardon, sir," said Slaughter, "I was not aware—"

—"Oh, say nothing about it, I beg," said Edward, "but what does he know of *me*?"

"I cannot guess," said Slaughter; "but when he was laid out on the forecastle for air, and the launch was alongside with the pipes marked

with Maxwell—I ask pardon—your name branded on them, he seemed quite in a taking, and swore, and raved."

"May I see this person?" said Edward.

"You may indeed," said Franklin, "and do what you like with him for me; for a more useless beast never had I aboard the Jonadab Brown. When he were quite well, he wa'n't worth his salt, and now he 's so tarnation sick, he 's a precious sight worse than no use at all whatsoever."

It struck Maxwell, that by the interest this man appeared to take in his name, he might be some fellow victim of his poor father in some of the woeful speculations of the past year; that America being the natural "refuge for the destitute," he might have been driven thither by his necessities, and was now compelled to menial labour before the mast of a merchant ship; and if so, what a gratifying task it would be to him to protect and shelter the sufferer, for whom the sorrows he had already experienced in his own case and that of his parent, had excited a lively interest. Maxwell had naturally warm feelings, and a susceptible heart; and the inherent qualities of his nature being at this particular juncture called into greater activity by the genial operation of Captain Amos Frank-

lin's punch, his mind was in an instant filled with a thousand bright visions. The hope of doing good, the delights of rescuing a countryman from toil and suffering, perhaps from death itself, all fired his imagination, and in the heyday of feeling he started up, and proposed a visit to the sick man's berth.

"Berth," as a fine lady of my acquaintance once said, when she was shown her accommodation in a steam packet, "do they call this my *birth?* I rather think it will be my *death.*"

Something of a similar nature was the space in which the unfortunate object of Maxwell's inquiry and benevolence was deposited; however, nothing daunted by the darkness, lowness, heat, and all the other attendants of the dismal hole in which he was located, he proceeded towards the spot, following the surgeon; but his career was suddenly stopped by a signal from that officer, indicating that the poor fellow was asleep; and as all parties agreed, rest was one of the most desirable objects to attain, they also agreed that to disturb him would be foolish, if not hazardous. The enterprize for the moment failed, and the expedition returned to the Captain's cabin "*re infectâ,*" but the impression made upon Edward's mind and feelings was not

likely to be obliterated by the trifling delay which this circumstance occasioned. Indeed, having visited the part of the vessel in which the sufferer lay, he was well convinced of the absolute necessity of doing something immediately, if any thing were to be done, to relieve a person labouring under such symptoms as those which Slaughter described.

As for Amos Franklin, no man could more loudly applaud the benevolence and philanthropy of Maxwell than he; not only did he anticipate the man's speedy recovery on shore—not only did he foresee the satisfaction which his excellent friend, (if he would allow him to call him so,) would receive from the restoration of his *protegé*, but above all—which he did *not* express—he himself "should get rid of a sick man not worth his salt, and of no use at all whatsoever."

It was late when Maxwell went ashore, full of the chivalrous delight of rescuing an Englishman from misery and death; the thing occurred too at such a happy moment, when his feelings and affections were all ready for use—devoted to one object only, and that a picture. His mind wanted active occupation, even beyond tasting wine, and branding barrels; his benevolence was, as it were, pent up, and here was an

opportunity of doing good, brought to him by what he could not help considering a lucky chance.

He had, however, put things *en train*. He had given directions to Captain Franklin to mention, or cause to be mentioned, to the invalid, the anxiety he had expressed about him, and to say that he should be on board the following morning, and wished to hear such an account of him as he might be inclined to give to a countryman of his own, and that he was also anxious to be of whatever use to him he could, and to offer him any assistance or accommodation in his power; a commission which, as I have already said, Captain Amos Franklin was, for reasons particularly concerning himself and his own interests, quite sure of executing to its very letter.

Franklin had scarcely finished his second cigar "arter breakfast," before, summoning Slaughter to council, he began his inquiries about the sick man Harris. Slaughter considered him a shade better; he quite agreed, as a tractable subordinate should, with Franklin; that going ashore was the only thing that could be relied upon for a chance of restoring him; and having therefore conceded most cordially upon

the measure of his removal, it became only necessary to apprize him of the fact, and announce to him the great interest the mere mention of his case had excited in Mr. Edward Maxwell.

At this period Harris had been, as was the case every day, brought up on deck and laid on a grating, covered with an old striped and starred ensign to catch the breeze as it blew over the lovely bay of Funchal, and the captain and the surgeon took the opportunity of speaking to him on the subject so near all their hearts.

"Well, Harris," said Franklin, "how do you find yourself to-day?"

"Weaker, I think, by twenty per cent. than yesterday," said Harris; "I am pretty near the wind-up, captain—my settling day is at hand."

"You must go ashore," said Slaughter.

"To be buried, I suppose," said the invalid.

"No, to recover," replied the doctor; "I am convinced that a month or six weeks in this island would bring you round."

"How long do we stay here, sir?" said Harris.

"We!" said Franklin, "why, if you mean the ship, about eight days, I calkilate; but if you can get well by staying behind, don't you

unsettle your mind about that—I'll let you off."

"Stay here!" said Harris, "how can I stay here?"

"Why," said Slaughter, "a gentleman who was on board yesterday, is interested in your case, and will take care of you during your recovery, and provide for your wants."

"Who is he," said Harris, "that he should be so good to a stranger?"

"An Englishman," said Franklin, "who feels for a countryman in distress."

"Distress, captain?" said Harris, "I am in no distress. I can work when I am well—I am distressed because I am ill; but I 'm in no distress."

"I mean," said Franklin, anxious to soothe his anxiety upon the point of his great utility when in health, "the distress of sickness. He is coming on board this afternoon, and will speak to you himself; and is willing to furnish you accommodation on shore."

"Who is the gentleman, sir?" said Harris.

"Our wine merchant," said Franklin.

"What, Maxwell?" said Harris.

"The same," replied the captain.

"Ah!"—said Harris, and a long pause ensued before he spoke.

"Do you know Mr. Maxwell?" said Slaughter.

"I, sir!" said the man; "not I. How should I know Mr. Maxwell?—I never was here before."

"But you seemed startled yesterday," said Slaughter, "when you saw the name branded on the casks."

"Did I?" said Harris. "It was not *that*, that startled me then. No; I'm much obliged to the gentleman for his offer, but though I'm poor, I'm proud. I can't accept his kindness—I'd rather not see him. If I *am* to go ashore, I'd rather go before he comes. They tell me there's an hospital ashore, doctor,—I can go there—but why not let me die where I am?"

"Your good friend, Mr. Maxwell, will not suffer that," said Franklin. "Have you been long from England, Harris?"

"Some time, sir,—some time," said Harris; "but what of that, captain? Something must be done for me, captain. If I shall die by staying on board, put me ashore—send me to the hospital—I——"

The sudden change of all his views and wishes—the rapid transition from the desire to be left to die quietly on board—and the anxious request to be sent on shore immediately, struck Slaughter as indications of derangement of intellect; and drawing the captain back from the position in which he stood near the patient, he considered it right, in the present stage of the case, to assent, or seem to assent, to his proposition.

"If," said he, "you really prefer going to an hospital, to being taken under the care of a benevolent gentleman——"

"I do, sir," said Harris, raising himself on the deck; "I do indeed, sir. Why should I lay myself under obligations to a gentleman who can care nothing about me, sir? Why—why should I trouble any body—why disturb a family?"

"He has no family here," said Franklin; "he is living alone. His father and sister, and his partner and wife, are all gone to England."

"Alone is he?" said Harris. "His father gone to England, and his daughter? What then, is this gentleman—eh?—alone—no, no, —but why—I—let me go ashore, sir—let me go

to this place of refuge—let me release you of all trouble—I can't live long—I——"

"My advice is," said Slaughter, taking the captain aside, "that he should be sent ashore as soon as possible. Delirium is again coming on. Mr. Maxwell would have a sad job of it: at the hospital there are proper accommodations and genteel attendance, and—that 's my advice, captain."

"Partiklur reasonable, I calkilate," said Franklin. "Harris," continued he, addressing the invalid, "the doctor and I agree that if you really prefer the hospital——"

"I do, I do—indeed I do!" said Harris, energetically; "anything to incurring obligations. Let me go directly—this moment—I am quite strong enough. See, sir—see, I can go."

Here the wretched man, by a violent effort, raised himself on his feet, but in an instant fell to the deck, and remained senseless from the violence of the shock.

For a moment, the bye-standers thought it was all over, and that life had fled; but he again "gradially," as the doctor said, recovered; and when he was sufficiently restored to repeat his expressions of anxiety to go to the hospital, the captain

ordered a boat to be manned, and poor Harris and his kit, consisting of a well filled sea-chest, and a sort of leathern haversack which had evidently seen better days, were conveyed from the Jonadab Brown, under the care and superintendence of Dr. Slaughter, who humanely accompanied the invalid ashore, and who was commissioned by Captain Franklin, after he had procured admission for his patient at the hospital, to proceed to Maxwell's house and report progress, in order that, if Maxwell should have no other object in visiting the ship than tendering his services to the poor man, he might be spared the trouble of an excursion in the heat of the day.

Scarcely had the boat got midway between the ship and the shore, than one of the sailors came aft to Captain Franklin, holding in his hand a small but weighty object.

"What 's that?" said the captain.

"Why," said the sailor, "in rowsting out Harris's hammock and things, just for to ventilate the place, we found this, sir. As right 's right, it belongs to him, sir; and so, if you please, just to count it out, as he sha'n't say hereafter we have taken any on it, we shall be glad if you will send it ashore after him."

Franklin desired the man to follow him to the cabin, and taking from him a shortish leathern bag or pouch, which it seemed Harris had been in the habit of wearing constantly about his person, but which, in the hurry and agitation of the moment of departure, he had left behind him, he proceeded to shake out its contents on the table; and, in the presence of the sailor, counted thirty-seven English sovereigns, nine half sovereigns, four American gold dollars, a Portuguese doubloon, and nineteen Spanish dollars in silver; which sum total, agreeing with what the sailor had previously "jotted down," on a piece of paper, the captain, according to the desire of his honest crew, took charge of, and determined upon giving to Maxwell, who had expressed so kind a desire of being serviceable to the man; and in whose care the money would be more secure, and rendered more useful to the invalid, than if entrusted either to himself in his precarious state of health, or to the attendants of the establishment in which he was placed.

Franklin, however, did not dismiss the sailor without expressing his satisfaction at his conduct, and that of his messmates, whose principles were not to be affected by their love of gain, or their dislike of an Englishman.

The captain, shortly after this proceeding, went ashore, and took his luncheon at Maxwell's, where he related the circumstances of the case, and delivered the modicum of treasure into his custody. They were here joined by the doctor, who had secured an asylum for the poor sailor; (and as Franklin, who loved a joke in his way, said "a *poor* sailor indeed he was,") which much rejoiced the said Franklin, because it had cleared the ship of an invalid, whom he had no doubt would very shortly become very troublesome, rather than from any hope of his eventual recovery. It appeared from what he could collect, that the germ of the man's present complaint had been a violent attack of yellow fever, and that some mental excitement to which, as Slaughter and the Portuguese doctor at the hospital agreed, he must have been previously subject, had so completely undermined and broken down his constitution, that there was no hope, even with the greatest care and attention, of restoring him.

"Well," said Maxwell, "as I have taken up the cause of this poor fellow, although I am rejected, I shall not be repulsed entirely. It will be my charge to see that he is taken care of where he is; and by being constituted trus-

tee of his property, I can avail myself of my official privilege to visit him."

"He will not be long here to burthen your kindness, I guess," said Slaughter. "He never seemed to me so much excited as when I left him; but I ought to do him the justice to say, that in his anxiety to learn all particulars concerning his benefactor, he showed any thing rather than want of gratitude for his kind intentions."

Maxwell had, during his residence in Madeira, and especially since his appearance in the responsible character which he now maintained there, so conciliated all parties, and so thoroughly ingratiated himself with every class of the inhabitants, that his influence was commanding; and he was sufficiently aware of that fact, to know that however well and liberally conducted the medical establishment at the Portuguese hospital might be, his appearing to take a personal interest in the case of any particular patient, would, without saying it to the prejudice of the general care and attention bestowed upon the inmates of the building, ensure every comfort and consideration that circumstances would permit of. This, of itself, would have been sufficient to induce him forthwith to visit his unknown countryman, but the

fact that he was actually in possession of property adequate to the purchase of any little luxuries the poor sufferer might require, tended to compel his putting his intentions into almost immediate execution; and accordingly, when his nautical friends had taken their departure, he proceeded, laden with Harris's treasure, to the infirmary.

Arrived there, he began his inquiries of the medical man in office, from whom he learned that the sailor about whom he was interested, had missed the bag in question, but that his mind seemed so entirely pre-occupied, that the care or even recollection of the subject appeared to have been entirely obliterated. He had put many questions to the officers of the establishment, as to the character of the English gentleman who had offered so generously to assist him; and appeared very much affected by every thing which they mentioned relating to him—that he was frequently attacked by delirium, but that a flood of tears, which the silent recurrence to some one subject invariably produced, as constantly relieved him; and that although his interest was only for a moment excited about the loss of his money, the haversack which he brought with him appeared to be an object of the most intense interest. He was at that mo-

ment, the officer said, sleeping, or perhaps only resting, with it under his head; he had never attempted to open it during the few hours he had been there, and it appeared to them sealed as well as locked; but that of course, it being no affair of theirs, they had no further noticed the case, than as it appeared of such vital importance to the poor fellow, whose manners and quiet submission to whatever was proposed to him, had quite gained the affections of the subordinates connected with the establishment.

"Do you think he would see me?" said Maxwell.

"I should advise your not pressing an interview upon him," said the attendant.

"But supposing," said Maxwell, "supposing that, as he has expressed so strong a disinclination to subject himself to obligation, and such a dislike to seeing the individual who was anxious to do him a service, you were to tell him that a person charged with the bag and money which he left on board, is commissioned by Captain Franklin to deliver it into his own hands?"

"In that way," said the attendant, "I consider that there will be no difficulty; but if the plan succeeds—and I am sure, sir, after the kindness and sympathy you have been good

enough to exhibit towards the poor fellow, any wish of yours it is our duty to comply with,—if the plan succeeds, and you should see him, do not, in the course of any conversation you may have with him, let it escape you that you *are* the person to whom, even as it is, he feels himself under such obligation—it is a turn of his disorder—it is a chord in the system which vibrates powerfully when touched; and whenever your name has been mentioned since he has been here, and since he has been aware of your good intentions, his agitation is terrible. As I have already said, tears give him relief, but perhaps, if the excitement were increased by your actual presence, the consequences might be fatal."

"God forbid," said Maxwell, "that any idle curiosity of mine should endanger a fellow-creature's life! Go you to him, and deliver the message I suggest—that I am a person deputed by the captain to hand him the purse; and if he admits me, which of course he will, I pledge myself to say nothing which can lead him to connect me in *that* character with myself in my own."

"Wait while I go," said the attendant, "and state the circumstance. He has a room entire-

ly to himself; and having administered some sedatives, he may be asleep. If so, I shall not disturb him; but I will be back in five minutes."

"Poor fellow!" thought Maxwell, "who knows but that this man, the menial of a merchant ship, the derided landsman of a motley crew, exposed to toil, to dangers, and to difficulties, may, like myself, have been nursed in the lap of comfort and luxury. What should I—I myself—have been, if a fostering hand in this very island had not been extended to my relief?—for all I know, the very same as he. Providence, all gracious Providence, has protected me, raised me up friends in strange lands, and made me a prop to the declining age and fortunes of my father. Is it not my duty, as well as my happiness, to do to others that which hath been done to me? and how can I better show my gratitude for the blessings that have been vouchsafed to me, than by sharing them with an object like this poor outcast? He may be base—he may be criminal; but how dare I judge my fellow creatures, weak and fallible as I am myself? By this man will I do my duty; he is a stranger, and in a foreign land—if he has erred and fallen, may God forgive him!"

Who is there who has experienced the gladdening soothing thrill of satisfaction which follows the commission of a good deed—small as may be its extent, and trifling as may be its effect, who will not enter into the blessed feeling which animated Edward Maxwell at this moment, and appreciate the intensity of benevolence which filled his generous heart?

"You must not disturb him now, sir," said the attendant, returning to the room where Maxwell was waiting—"he is in a sound sleep. I have pursued the system the surgeon of the ship adopted—and if not eventually successful, I am sure it is the best to be adopted."

"Might I see him?" said Maxwell; "for I have excited in myself an interest about him which I can hardly define."

"To be sure," said the attendant; "tread lightly—a sudden waking from sleep procured as his has been, might be dangerous—this way sir."

The attendant preceded Edward cautiously and silently—the young merchant followed step by step—they ascended the staircase, and passed through several spacious rooms—at length they reached that, in which the poor fellow lay.

He was still fast asleep—his head turned

towards the wall and partly covered with the bed-clothes, so that Maxwell might as well have remained where he was, if he expected to derive any new interest in the sufferer, by becoming personally acquainted with him. The attendant calculating professionally upon the restlessness of his patient, and knowing that his face was turned precisely in the opposite direction when he left him before, motioned to Maxwell to stand where he was. They waited and watched—two, three, four minutes elapsed, and all was still; so still that Edward could hear his own heart throb —another minute—the attendant lifted his finger to announce that his patient was moving.

"Poor Kate!" said the sufferer, "God help thee!"

"Hush!" said the attendant.

The sufferer turned on his side, and exhibited his pale emaciated countenance to Maxwell.

It was APPERTON!

CHAPTER X.

" The parent's partial fondness for a child,
An only child, can surely be no crime.
'Twere breaking all the tender strings of nature,
Which tune our souls to harmony and love—
'Twere bidding us to act against ourselves,
To disregard our children's safety here ;
No—care's a father's right—a pleasing right—
In which he labours with a home-felt joy."

SHIRLEY.

IT will be recollected that we left Charles Somerford in all the confusion of modest gratitude to Lord Lessingham, for his Lordship's splendid offers of friendship and protection ; having, however, as he could scarcely avoid, accepted them—any scruples which the delicacy of a man of no family and small fortune might interpose, between the intentions of a man of high rank and great wealth, and which Charles Somerford was as likely as any man living to bring forward, were softened down by the promise of the old lord, that the day would come when he would have no scruple at

all in availing himself of his proposed munificence; by which the major concluded that the noble earl meant to convince him, that if he did not choose to consent to his own aggrandizement, he, the said noble earl, would forthwith make a will, by which he should bequeath the entire wealth which he had offered him, for the foundation of an hospital or the endowment of a school; objects beyond question meritorious in themselves, but to the which it would require more than mortal philosophy to devote a fortune, the possession of which would not only ensure his own happiness, but the happiness of those whom he loved better than himself.

Charles Somerford was compelled to quit Lord Lessingham's beautiful villa, in the neighbourhood of London, for a day or two, in order to make the necessary arrangements for taking up his abode with him altogether; but his lordship, when he quitted him, earnestly entreated him to make his absence as short as possible, and so to settle his affairs, that frequent visits to the metropolis were not to be considered essential. Charles bowed to a wish, to the gratification of which Lord Lessingham was certainly entitled. The whole object of his life seemed to be a constant association with the individual who had been beloved by his Emily, and it was little less

the duty, on the part of Somerford, who had accepted one part of the treaty, to do all he could to fulfil the other.

Nothing could better suit poor Charles than the quiet of the noble Earl's retreat. The neighbours, vying in anxiety to show their respect and attention to the venerable peer, were kept at bay, as it were, by his lordship's young friend; he received their visits, he returned them; and when he could—as he did in the course of a short time—persuade his lordship to admit a few chosen friends in an evening, Charles had the arrangement and management of everything.

But it was impossible not to observe, although occasionally the scene was enlivened by a transient gleam of sunshine, that Lord Lessingham was gradually sinking, and that too, faster, as time wore on; till at last, after a night of great restlessness and agitation, Charles was summoned earlier than usual to the breakfast-room, where the Earl had already arrived; but it seemed to Charles that something very decisive in its effect upon his Lordship's constitution had take place since they parted the of preceding evening. Something like paralysis, which Lord Lessingham himself was evidently unconscious, had affected him, and Charles

could scarcely conceal the effect which the sudden, and, as it seemed to him, awful alteration of the old lord's appearance made upon him, on his first entrance to the apartment. There was an expression in Lord Lessingham's countenance, that Somerford could not separate in his mind from a warning of death; and although his lordship repeatedly assured him that he did not feel himself worse, his anxious young friend was unable to dispel the serious apprehensions he entertained from the first moment he saw him in the morning.

Without apprizing his lordship of his intention, he despatched a servant with a note, requesting a visit from the physician who always attended the family, intimating at the same time, a wish, that he should make it appear as if his calling were accidental, lest Lord Lessingham should be needlessly alarmed by his requiring advice, at a moment, when, according to his own feelings, it was not necessary.

It was afternoon before the physician arrived. Lord Lessingham received him as usual; but in a moment was convinced that Charles had been prompted by his apprehension of danger, to send for him.

"I know," said his lordship, "that Somer-

ford has caused you to be sent for, doctor; he thinks me dangerously ill—but I am not so."

"I hope not, my lord;" said the physician; "but, with me, the precautionary system is a favourite one. I should recommend quiet and repose."

"Do you think me worse?" said Lord Lessingham.

"Not worse, my lord," replied the doctor; "but still, so delicate, that a change might occur before we were aware of it, without proper care."

"I have much to say;" said Lord Lessingham; "much to tell, and much to explain to Somerford—if I——"

"It would be advisable to do it then," said the doctor; "for——"

"Is it so far gone as that?" said Lord Lessingham.

"Not so, indeed, Lord Lessingham," said the physician; "but I am quite sure, the sooner your mind is relieved from business of importance, the more comfortable your bodily health will be; and I should suggest the getting over any conversation likely to interest or agitate you, as speedily as possible."

"I see—I see it all," said the invalid;

"another day, and perhaps I may be unable to explain myself—it shall be so. Leave me then, and come to us this evening."

"I will be here," said the physician: "in the mean time, let your mind be as little acted upon as possible."

"Ah!" said Lord Lessingham, "that caution is useless—it must be acted upon, and powerfully too—but I must trust to Providence to support me through the trial. At nine then I shall see you."

"Please God!" said the physician, in a tone which implied that *he* would certainly be punctual, but that Lord Lessingham might not be conscious of his presence.

Somerford followed the physician from the room, and found his opinion generally coincided with his own as to Lord Lessingham's health: there was no immediate danger, but he was gradually sinking, and the change which had actually taken place within the last four-and-twenty hours, and which had excited Charles's alarm, had been certainly more rapid than the usual course. The return of the doctor at nine, Somerford looked forward to with anxiety; and he resolved, if his excellent friend and patient should have lost ground considerably at that

time, not to suffer the physician to quit the house during the night.

When Charles returned to Lord Lessingham's room, he found him weeping bitterly. Charles endeavoured to soothe and cheer him, but his efforts were vain, and Somerford thought the wisest thing to do, was to suffer his grief, which he of course attributed to the recollection of poor Lady Emily, which was so indelibly recorded in his mind, to have its way. He sat himself by the side of the couch on which Lord Lessingham was extended, and waited watchfully his return to composure.

"Charles," said his Lordship, "that I am dying I begin to feel; the words of the physician have opened the whole truth to me more clearly than my personal feelings; and while I have strength, I must unburthen myself of that which has lain a heavy load upon my heart for years. What I am about to say is elsewhere recorded; and recorded in such a form, as to render the effects which the disclosure must produce certain and incontestable.——I should wish after I have relieved my mind of the detail, which you must hear, to have with me our worthy rector. I long to join with him in prayer;

but I cannot do so with satisfaction to myself, until you have heard the history of my early life, which I am about to impart to you."

"Spare me, my lord," said Charles; "spare yourself the recital of events which may agitate and unsettle your mind."

"Spare!" said Lord Lessingham; "no, Charles, no, I will not spare myself, who spared not others. Listen—As you know, Charles, I was born in the year 1759—born with all the advantages of rank and fortune, and grew, after the usual course of modern education, to be what is called a man of fashion, and a man of the world, before I had reached the years of discretion. At that period, in the heyday of youth, and in the tumult of passions by which youth is assailed, my station, my accomplishments, and, as I then was told, my personal merits, obtained me an easy access to all societies, and a greater share of favour than perhaps I deserved. My father proposed a marriage to me, which, like most others entered into under similar circumstances, was one of convenience. I refused to obey his wishes. I was fondly attached——"

Here his lordship seemed overcome by the recollection of past circumstances, and Charles

entreated him to take some sort of refreshment before he proceeded. He did so, and shortly resumed his narration.

"I was," continued his lordship, "devotedly attached to a being all innocence and goodness. I loved her with the ardency of youth, and the warmth of a first affection: a marriage with *her* would have been destruction to my worldly views and prospects, and at the moment when my father was urging another connexion, must have separated us for ever. No arts were untried on my part, no solicitations unused, to induce this amiable, excellent girl to consent to be mine without the sanction of the church. I own it, Charles—I confess, I admit my errors—it is that confession, it is those admissions, from which I expect relief. She withstood the specious flattery of her superior; she resisted the glittering offers of wealth and splendour which I basely made her—she triumphed,—and I, devoted to her for her beauty and her merit, became the worshipper of her virtue and excellence.—I married her."

Lord Lessingham again appeared exhausted, but the pause of a few moments recovered him.

"A few months of stolen bliss," continued his Lordship, "for my father never knew of the

marriage, were all that was granted me in return for my filial disobedience. She died soon after having given birth to a daughter, and I, reckless of consequences, and driven to desperation by the early blight which had fallen upon my joy and happiness, declared my readiness to obey my father's wishes with respect to my marriage, and in less than six months was united to the lady he had selected for me. The happiness such a match was likely to produce, must be, as you can conceive, most problematical; and after bearing me a daughter, my fellow victim to a marriage of expediency, fled from me to the arms of a nobleman now, like herself, gone to his long account, leaving me an only daughter.

"That daughter," said Lord Lessingham, "grew up the pride of my heart, the idol of my affections, mild, amiable, accomplished, and beautiful; she possessed every quality that could adorn her sex. Animated with intelligence, and an ever-varying expression, her countenance was the index of a mind pure and unsophisticated, as it was vigorous and active; in her manners, there was about her a winning sweetness, a grace which courts improve, but cannot give, and an unstudied genuineness of participation in all the hopes and

fears of others, joined to an artless energy and warm enthusiasm for those she loved. I speak of a darling daughter, Charles, perhaps too favourably; but she was a superior being,—she walked amidst the vices and the follies of the world, unsullied, uncontaminated; and while the artless smile of pleasure played upon her cheek, and the bright fire of intellect sparkled in her eyes, there was ever beaming round her, the pure radiancy of virtue to sanctify her beauty.

"On my elevation to the earldom of Lessingham," said his lordship, "I obtained the barony to be in remainder to her and her issue generally; and she married, (with all my hopes of happiness for her, as I thought, realized,) the Earl of Carisbrook, a man distinguished in his military career, and universally esteemed by all who knew him in private. But Charles, Charles, the follies of my early days!—sins—call them sins—have been visited upon me in later life. My noble son-in-law fell on the field of battle—a nobler spirit never winged its flight to heaven than his; but my poor Emily never recovered the shock, and although she lingered on, and as you know, has been lost to me but three short years; the sword that pierced her husband's heart, broke hers."

"Calm yourself, my dear lord," said Charles, "pray pause—these recollections are too much for you."

"No," said his lordship; "I am performing a sacred duty, let it tear me, rack me as it will. I shall be easier when I have done my duty. With her dying breath she bequeathed me our poor, dear, lost child. Oh, Somerford! Somerford! death has been busy in my house! The chastening hand of Providence has been over me; but I bow—my poor—fond—darling Emily!"——

Lord Lessingham was here so exhausted, that he fell back on the couch, and for a moment Somerford dreaded the worst, and that all was over; he chafed his temples, and rubbed his hands, and at length again the old man resumed.

"Emily," said his Lordship, and the very name brought fresh tears into his eyes; "Emily was the only child of what I had hoped to see a happy, prosperous marriage; to her on my death, as my heir, would have devolved all my estates and fortune, and the barony which would have been her mother's had she survived me. Lord Carisbrook's title descended to a younger brother, whom you have seen, I think, at Cheltenham; and now, at nearly seventy years

of age, am I left alone in the wide world, to sink into my grave unregarded and unlamented."

"Oh! do not say so, Lord Lessingham," said Charles, "while a being devoted to you is at your side, whose affec——"

—"Affection!" cried Lord Lessingham; "affection to me! no, no! you have not heard the whole of this strange tale; much remains to be divulged, much to be told, which must make you hate me. I told you, Charles, I married the woman of my heart, the being I idolized; but what was the sequel? Pride, hateful pride, and the fear of a father, prouder than myself, induced me carefully to conceal from all the world, the fact of the marriage I had contracted. Emma, the beloved of my heart, in pure affection, she, whom of all God's creatures I loved the most, died in obscurity, and I, to stifle all remarks, to obviate all inquiry, sent forth into the world as an orphan, the poor infant child to whom she had given birth, and fastened on its name the stamp of illegitimacy."

"Pray, pray, calm yourself," said Charles.

—"I am calm—calm as I can be," said his lordship: "listen, listen to me: that infant—that daughter, deserted by her father, cast off, abandoned, and thrown upon the world, was

educated by a hired menial as his child, passed in the world for his offspring, and as his daughter, married—"

—"There—" interrupted Charles.

"Hear me, Charles," said Lord Lessingham; "in that station, with such a portion as her reputed father could be supposed to give her, she married, became the affectionate wife of a professional man, honourable and talented; but whom, since his death, I hear was poor. It was through this connexion of hers I knew the Maxwells, with whom you would have allied yourself."

"Indeed, my lord," said Charles.

"Yes, yes," said Lord Lessingham, "the man who married my daughter, the daughter I disowned, and to the last neglected, was a friend of Maxwell in his youth; but as he sank in the world through neglect and illness, Maxwell advised him to retire to the neighbourhood of London, where he might obtain, if a confined, at least a respectable practice. In that place he died—the husband of my daughter, Charles, died—died in poverty! Are these not crimes to shudder at? Are these ——"

"Pray, sir, do not needlessly agitate yourself," said Charles.

—"He left a son," continued Lord Lessingham, "of whom I had heard favourable accounts, and who survived his mother, who died unnoticed by her unnatural, cruel parent—that son was the *protègé* of Maxwell."

—"Of Maxwell!" said Charles.

"Of Maxwell!" rejoined his Lordship; "he went abroad, fought, bled in his country's service; and I watched his actions; my eye was ever on him. Pride, pride, hated pride, Charles, induced me to smother every right feeling and repress even parental affection. My beloved grand-daughter Emily, was the inheritor of my title, of my fortune: acknowledging this boy with all his merits, and all his rights, would have deprived *her* of her honours and station. I did him this continued injustice—I kept my shameful secret."

"But now," said Somerford, "now that all you cared for, is gone, restore him to those rights.—Where is he now?"

"BEFORE ME, CHARLES!" exclaimed his Lordship;——"you, you, my much-injured Charles! You are the grandson I deserted—you are the rightful heir, whose claims I endeavoured to supersede."

It is impossible to say which of the two actors

in this scene was the more overcome at this crisis. In a moment all the past kindness and affectionate treatment of Lord Lessingham was accounted for; in a moment Charles was at the feet of his aged grandfather, the acknowledged successor of his honours and his fortune.

"I have but one excuse to make," said Lord Lessingham, raising himself on the couch, "but one palliative to bring forward in extenuation of my unnatural conduct. The follies of youth, the folly of pride had estranged me from your mother during my father's life-time. It would have been worse than madnesss on my part to have attempted to bring either her or you forward, or even to name you: thus what my own thoughtlessness had entailed upon your unoffending mother, my subsequent apprehensions entailed on you; and when the dear child, who is now gone—taken from me in judgment for my base attempts, Charles,—grew into my love, into my very heart of hearts, I had not courage to do you an act of justice, which would at once deprive her of the advantages for the attainment of which all my influence had been exerted."

"For Heaven's sake, sir," said Charles, "think not for one moment on what is passed.

Our dear Lady Emily's virtues and qualities are of themselves sufficient reasons to me for maintaining her claim against that of an unknown orphan."

"Generous Charles!" said his lordship, "let me conclude. When I heard, which I did, of the death of your poor mother's supposed parents, I hastened to the spot, with the intention of declaring her origin and avowing her legitimacy; but I saw your father: he convinced me by his manner, that he was wholly ignorant of every circumstance which could lead to a discovery, if I did not make it; and then being under awe of a parent, whose pride had been my greatest bane, I gladly availed myself of his want of knowledge and left him uninformed of my name or my intentions. I was not unmindful of him in after-days; and justice to myself compels me to tell you, that he received, during the latter part of his life, from an unknown source, a competency, which I dared not exceed, lest a large source of income should excite suspicion as to the power of the donor, and thus lead to a discovery I wished to avoid; but never, never can I think of the fate of my daughter, who was abandoned by me. Oh, Charles! see —see in me an example that neither rank nor

wealth can save the sinner from the pangs of remorse, the stings of conscience."

"Useless now, sir, are these regrets," said Somerford; "her son——"

"Aye, Charles," interrupted his lordship, "let me explain, my conduct to you, while I am able. I watched your progress at Maxwell's —I traced your departure—I even attributed it to the right cause: yet I did not regret it. You were provided for, and provided for, away from me and mine: you returned, and by chance was thrown near me—to that chance we are indebted for this explanation. The death of my poor daughter, Lady Emily, the fate of her husband, and the deviation of his title from the right line in consequence, narrowed my connexions and reduced my former importance; and when my poor Emily sickened, and I saw increasing illness gain upon her, I——"

"Spare yourself the recital, my lord," said Charles; "I——"

"Suffice it then to say," sobbed the old man, "that I knew of your illness at the Cape; that I traced you homeward; and that I engaged a friend of mine, without of course divulging the smallest circumstance likely to lead him to-

wards the truth, to observe the movements of the Maxwell family, whom I understood to be at Brighton at the period of your return. Your landing there was unexpected, and of course I knew nothing of it; for Lord Bryanston, whose services I put in requisition, was not aware of the connexion between you and the surgeon's family. I soon found from other sources, that you had been successful in your career in India; and when the offer of your acquaintance was made me by Macleod, I grasped at it with rapture—the smouldering affections of nature burst into a flame, and I received the child of my deserted daughter with delight.

"Then it was, Charles, that beholding in you all that I considered desirable in a husband for my poor Emily, I encouraged the hope that you might be united. Then should I have done you the justice I had so long withheld, and have acknowledged you as the son of my first daughter, in whose right, according to the remainder in the patent, you succeed to my barony; because you would have conferred the rank upon your cousin, and thus have blended all the objects I had in view, in one. But that, however, was not to

be; but I have done you justice now, and now my mind is at ease."

"Let me implore your blessing, sir," said Charles; "forgive me the pain my conduct must have caused you; forgive the injustice I may have done you, in not understanding the full extent of your kindness."

"Kindness, Charles," said Lord Lessingham; "my kindness has been but small, the justice I have done, compulsory; for had my poor Emily survived, you would have lived and died unconscious of our relationship. But," added his lordship, again relapsing into tears, "the ways of Providence are inscrutable, and you are righted."

His lordship, at this period, was so much exhausted, that Charles forbade him, as he valued his happiness, to continue to speak; and remained at his side watching him, as he slumbered, from the effects of the exertion of mind and body which he had made.

What were Charles's feelings, as he contemplated the picture before him—the recollections which flashed across him, when he recalled the treatment of Maxwell; his having exiled him from England to avoid an union with his daughter—Maxwell, too, whose vanity would have

been excited, whose pride gratified in the highest degree, by the prospect of such a connexion: but such is ever the success of the most calculating manœuvrers, who sacrifice the best affections of those they profess to love, to the petty lucre of gain or the paltry aggrandizement which adventitious rank may bestow.

Lord Lessingham slumbered on, until the arrival of the medical attendant, whose visit he expected. The doctor pronounced his noble patient weakened only by the fatigue of conversation, and recommended quiet and repose as most likely to produce temporary relief; for without knowing how very much the rank and fortune of Somerford would be changed by the death of his lordship, and therefore without any view of flattering his expectations as a worldly doctor might think it amiable to do, the said doctor gave Charles distinctly to understand, that the decay which no art could check had begun, and that the greatest point to be attained, in the present state of his lordship's constitution, was to smooth the path to eternity by the regular process of abstaining from any topic which could agitate or irritate the patient.

Lord Lessingham, as if perfectly aware of the value of time, had made arrangements for

seeing his solicitor, and other persons connected with his worldly affairs, the next day; and accordingly, in the presence of several witnesses, he signed and acknowledged the written statement of all that he had told his avowed grandson Charles; appended to which, were the certificate of his marriage with Miss Emma Gaysford, the extract from the register of the baptism of their legitimate daughter, that of the baptism of Charles Somerford, together with the certificate of the marriage of Somerford and his mother; in short, every document necessary to make the facts of the case clear and unquestionable had been collected, and would have been previously brought into use, had the projected marriage between Charles and his cousin Lady Emily been brought about

The marriage of Lord Lessingham with Miss Gaysford took place in June, 1780; she died in March, 1781, leaving the new-born infant, Sophia, afterwards mother to Charles. In the year 1798, being between seventeen and eighteen years of age, Sophia married Somerford under circumstances which have already been recapitulated; and Charles was born in the year 1799. Mrs. Woodly, the supposed mother of Mrs. Somerford, died in 1805; the Somerfords set-

tled in London in 1806; and Somerford died in 1815. Charles, then under the protection of Maxwell, left England for India in 1817, at the age of eighteen, and returned to Great Britain in 1825, after an absence of eight years, his mother having died in the year 1822.

All these dates having been duly collected, and the necessary papers arranged, Lord Lessingham, with perfect composure and self-possession, completed his worldly duties by delivering his will to his solicitors; and on their departure resigned himself to the care of his spiritual adviser, and the constant attention of his newly acknowledged grandson, with a mind unburthened of a heavy load, and a heart full of sincere repentance and pious faith.

While all these matters were, as the Americans say, progressing, much more was doing in other parts of the world; and Hanningham, whose efforts in ascertaining the real amount of Maxwell's liabilities continued unsuccessful, became more and more agitated as the days passed between his first interview with Hall, and that upon which the recorder's report was to be received by the king. It so happened, that a continued illness of our beloved monarch delayed the reception of this awful catalogue of

crime, even beyond Hanningham's hopes; for his object was, whatever the cause of his anxiety might be, to protract the period of Hall's existence, until some other event occurred, but what that event was, not even his better half had yet ascertained; seeing that, as I have already said, he deprived himself of sharing with her the greatest satisfaction he had ever received from a piece of unexpected intelligence, lest she should, in her eagerness to delight others, divulge the good news before the proper season had arrived for doing so, and before Hall had legally and authoritatively made his statement, which was to exonerate the memory of old Mr. Hanningham from obloquy and disgrace. However, it could not be expected that the man should voluntarily confess the commission of a capital offence, with which there was now no chance of his being charged, while there yet remained the slightest hope of his obtaining a commutation of one of which he actually stood convicted.

There was one person, with whom the reader is as yet but little acquainted, whose heart would be gladdened by the intelligence which Hall's confession would convey, and that was the sister of Hanningham, of whom the culprit spoke in Newgate. This young lady, beautiful

and accomplished, and eligible to a place in the best society, was by the fatal blow on her family, driven from the world: circumstances prevented her accepting an asylum in her brother's house at Madeira, and her natural feelings and affections prompted her to utter seclusion. Hanningham looked forward, therefore, with increased satisfaction to the establishment of his venerated parent's innocence, inasmuch as he was quite certain that a knowledge of that fact would bring back his affectionate daughter to the world, and restore her to the comforts and pleasures of a family circle. Still so terrified was he, lest he should, knowing what he did, fail in establishing the facts, that even *she* was left in ignorance of any part of the disclosure upon which so much depended.

Five weeks had now rolled over Hanningham's head since the interview with Hall, and every hour increased his anxiety, till at length one morning at breakfast, he saw announced in the newspapers that the dreaded report had been presented, and that Hall, amongst others, was ordered for execution the following Wednesday. His wife, whose mind when *she* read newspapers, ran upon fashionable arrivals and departures, on births, deaths, marriages, and

a detail of parties at which, after burning lamps that never were lighted, inhaling the sweets of flowers that never were planted, describing suppers that never were prepared, the said newspapers proceeded to enumerate a list of illustrious visitors who were neither invited or expected, or if invited or expected never came—could not conceive what violent interest her husband could take about the recorder's report. In short, she thought it rather a peculiarity in a gentleman whose father had made an exhibition upon the scaffold, to hunt out that particular portion of the paper to direct his attention to; and now that he saw the dreadful fact announced, his agitation arrived at such a pitch, that she feared something a little wrong in his brains; he was so dreadfully excited at the very sound of an execution. If the dear, good-hearted man would but have told her the whole truth—and now that Hall's death was decided upon, one would have thought he might, at all events, have done so—she would have been easy, and the house would have gone on comfortably.

It is quite a mistaken idea, that a woman cannot keep a secret—nobody so well. Trust her but with half, or try to keep it from her

altogether, and she is sure to beat you; because her pride prompts her to find out what the man thinks it right to conceal, and then her vanity induces her to tell, what she has found out; and this in order to show her power of discovery. Trust all to her, and she will never betray you; but half a confidence is not worth having: so perhaps Hanningham thought, and as he did not feel himself justified in giving his lady the whole of his, gave her none.

Two or three days after this curious scene of agitation, Mr. Hanningham made his appearance in the presence of his lady, looking like the summer's sun, all glowing with smiles, excessively hot, and prodigiously happy.

"Do you think, my love," said he, as he walked about her boudoir dancingly, "do you think we could secure some more bed-rooms in this house?"

They had removed from the hotel into furnished lodgings in Albemarle Street.

"I dare say we might, my dear," said she, who sat transfixed to her chair, her eyes following the movements of her husband round the room, as the whip-man at Astley's follows the gentleman in tight whites and spangles, who is attitudinizing on the horse.

"Shall I ring for the servant, and inquire?" said Mr. Hanningham.

"To be sure, my love, if you like," said Mrs. Hanningham; "but why do you want more rooms?"

"Because, my dear," said Mr. Hanningham, "I expect more company."

"Company, love?" said Mrs. Hanningham.

"Company, dear," said Mr. Hanningham.

"Where are they coming from?" said Mrs. Hanningham.

"Can't you guess?" said Mr. Hanningham.

"Not I," said the lady.

"That's very odd," said the gentleman.

"Who are they?" asked the lady.

"An old gentleman and his daughter," replied the gentleman.

"Oh, I know now," said Mrs. Hanningham; "Mr. and Miss Maxwell. But do you think it safe for them to come?"

"Perfectly safe," said Hanningham; "you may rely upon it—if it were not safe, do you think I should advise it?"

"No, my love," said Mrs. Hanningham; "only Kate is such a favourite of your's."

"Ring the bell, my sweet Mrs. Hanning-

ham," said the husband; "and don't be jealous."

"Jealous—oh!" said the lady; "I——"

"No, my dear, I know," said Hanningham; "but perhaps you will take the trouble to inquire, yourself—ladies manage all these things so much better than men."

"Anything to save men the trouble, I believe," said Mrs. Hanningham. "However, I 'll be the good patient wife, and go."

She went; and Hanningham having performed sundry evolutions in the way of walking and skipping about the apartment until she returned, was then informed that ample accommodation could be afforded for the expected visitors.

"You must remember," said Mrs. Hanningham, "when they come, not in your careless manner to call them Maxwell, as Kate writes me word, their friend Mr. Moss did."

"My dear, trust to me," said Mr. Hanningham. "If I call them Maxwell, I will suffer you to cut my head off."

"When do they come?" said Mrs. Hanningham.

"This evening," said Mr. Hanningham.

"From Portsmouth?" inquired Mrs. Hanningham.

"Exactly so, my dear," replied Mr. Hanningham; "they will expect a late dinner here, so—you understand, my love—I have said."

And here again Mr. Hanningham performed the part of Harlequin, ending his rapid circuit round the room by saluting Columbine in the character of his wife, in a manner the most ardent and sonorous.

"Why you are mad, my dear Hanningham," said Mrs. Hanningham.

"What for doing *so?*" said Mr. Hanningham. "But I believe I *am* rather flighty, my love," added he: "so, with your permission, I shall absent myself for an hour or two, having business of importance to transact. Now, remember dinner at half-past seven."

"Does Dawes come with them, my love?" said Mrs. Hanningham.

"D—— Dawes!" said Mr. Hanningham—"who cares for Dawes—what's Dawes to me or I to Dawes?—never mind Dawes, my beloved—let everybody shift for himself—and do be punctual. Good bye, love—adieu till seven—I cannot stay in the house, so I must e'en go out."

And away went Hanningham out of the room as Jones goes off the stage, making, as it were, a point at his exit; not but that in ge-

neral, Hanningham was as different a person from Mr. Richard Jones, as Mr. Richard Jones, the teacher of elocution, in his study in Chapel Street, Grosvenor Place, is from the same Mr. Richard Jones, on the stage of Drury Lane playhouse. It must be a comical sight to see this vivacious actor in his elevated academy, teaching lawyers to plead, members to speak, judges to sentence, and prelates to preach; but he is a safe man, and never blabs about his pupils, —so he deserves the patronage he meets with.

Poor Mrs. Hanningham was left in a state of perplexity; she had never seen her husband so wonderfully gay, so marvellously excited, as he was to day—and yet in the morning he was in the most melancholy possible humour; some discovery in Maxwell's business, had no doubt put him into these high spirits, and he was resolved to let the *denouement* come upon her as the most agreeable surprise he could contrive.

Never did time seem to move so slowly as during the next three or four hours. At last, however, seven o'clock struck, and punctual to his time was Hanningham—but when he reappeared his spirits were not the least lowered by their constant exercise during the day. His lady, dressed for dinner, received him with

a mixture of pleasure and apprehension, lest the state he was in, should continue, and she never should subdue him down into rationality again.

Eight o'clock arrived—it was dusk—the dinner was done—overdone—waiting: the servants had twice been into the drawing-room to know if they were to wait any longer—at five minutes past eight, a knock and ring announced an arrival, and a yellow postchaise come through, from Liphook, drew up at the door.

"There they are, by jingo!" said Hanningham, jumping up, and running, or rather tumbling down stairs to receive the visitors.

"Mercy on us!" said Mrs. Hanningham—not quite relishing the enthusiasm which her husband displayed upon the occasion of Miss Maxwell's arrival, and resolving to treat her with a proportionable degree of coolness, so as to mark her disapprobation of his conduct.

"Up stairs—up stairs!" she heard Hanningham say—and then followed a noise of kissing—extremely tantalizing, and not, as she thought, altogether called for, under these circumstances—"Up stairs—take care—mind the corner—there, up with you—O, never mind the things—up with you."

And amidst all this jumble of words, and scuffling and scrambling, and pushing and thumping, who should rush into the drawing-room, to the astonishment of Mrs. Hanningham, but old Mr. Wilson, the agent from Fayal, and his charming daughter.

CHAPTER XI.

He comes, *my lord!* with all th' expecting joys
Of a young promised lover.

LEE.

MISFORTUNES, they say, never come alone—in our case, it seems that arrivals are equally pluralized; we have just been startled by the unexpected appearance of the Fayal agent and his daughter, and we must be prepared for the sudden entrance upon the scene, of another character of our drama.

Maxwell, Moss, and Mrs. Apperton, were seated in council, discussing the best mode of proceeding in their affairs, Moss still adhering to his advice of remaining where they were, when Mrs. Dawes suddenly made her appearance in the little drawing-room, of Melrose Cottage, evidently in a state of great agitation,

and in a tone between laughing and crying, begged Mr. Moss to step out for a minute.

Maxwell, whose apprehensions for his personal freedom had never abated or relaxed since his return to England, in a moment conjured up a thousand horrible visions. Kate herself was terrified, and Moss, believing something of the sort himself, sallied out as fast as he could.

"I am lost!" said Maxwell; "I know it—the harpies of the law are on me. Kate, I shall never survive it."

"Compose yourself, my dearest father," said Mrs. Apperton; "why needlessly terrify yourself?"

"I know it *is* so," said the agitated old man.

"'Tis he, Mr. Moss!" said Mrs. Dawes.

"Himself," said Moss.

"He is in the back parlour at this very moment," replied the faithful housekeeper.

"Call Kittums," said Godfrey.

"They name *you*, Kate," said Maxwell.

"What is it?" said Mrs. Apperton.

"Don't flurry yourself, dear," said Mrs. Dawes, "it 's he."

"Who?"

"Me, Kate, me," exclaimed Edward Max-

well, rushing from the little parlour; and in another moment Kate was in her fond brother's arms.

"Is it my boy?" said Maxwell; "then something decisive has occurred. No trifling object would have brought him to England—of that I am convinced."

The scene at Melrose cottage was most rapidly changed from doubt and apprehension to pleasure, and it must be confessed, curiosity; for it was quite clear, putting the probability of what it might be, out of the question, that Edward was full charged with something of first-rate importance to the family.

It was not, however, to be expected that poor Edward could immediately unburthen himself of his secret, whatever it was, while floods of inquiries upon every minor point poured in upon him, and while Mrs. Dawes remained admiring and wondering at the great improvement which she saw in her young favourite's personal appearance. By degrees, they ascertained that he had been eleven days on his voyage, that he had been put ashore at Cowes, and that he had arrived *via* Newport and Wooton-bridge, at Ryde; but what the object he had in view in quitting Madeira was,

they had not yet discovered, nor, strange to say, did Edward appear able to explain.

In fact, Edward had a communication to make of the most vital importance to all their prospects and future proceedings; but he was apprehensive of exciting too great a sensation by declaring it at once: indeed, his object was to get one of the party alone, to whom he might divulge the truth, and then, in combination with that individual, inform the person most of all interested in his narrative; however, as it turned out, he was relieved from his embarrassment without much manœuvring.

"Edward, dear," said Kate, "you are in mourning."

"Yes, Kate," said young Maxwell, "and so will you be, I conclude, very shortly."

"How do you mean?" said the elder Maxwell. "What has happened?"

Edward made a sign to his father, unperceived by his sister, which conveyed the truth to his mind.

"Kate, my love," said Maxwell, "go to your room for a few minutes—it will be better. Edward has something to communicate—let us hear what it is."

"She may remain," said Edward; "but she must prepare to hear strange things—important things—to her, most of all, important."

"Do they relate to Apperton?" said Maxwell.

"They do," replied Edward.

"Where is he?" said Moss; "what have you done with him?"

"I can hear all," said Kate.

"I should think you might, Kittums," said Moss.

"I forewarn you of a shock," said Edward; "perhaps the dress I wear, has already driven your thoughts into the right channel—Apperton is dead!"

"That's just what I anticipated," said Moss.

From the manner in which Kate received the announcement of her widowhood, little could be gathered as to the precise nature of her feelings—she burst into tears. Edward offered her his arm to lean on, and she quitted the room. A violent affectation of grief would have been absurd, because grief, sincerely, she could not feel for such a happy riddance. The tumult which the intelligence excited in her bosom arose, no doubt, from mingled sentiments, and she was handed over to the care of Mrs.

Dawes, under whose tender management she was more likely to recover her calmness and serenity.

It appeared from Edward's account of the last days of Apperton, that he had attended him constantly and assiduously through his illness, which gained daily upon him, and at last terminated fatally in about three weeks after his arrival at Madeira. Before his death, the unhappy victim of low ambition and the pride of wealth, disclosed all that part of his history which was involved in obscurity, and admitted to Edward that when he found Maxwell's property gone, in a great measure, his object was to alarm him with the threat of immediate danger, and drive him away from England. That he had made every arrangement to facilitate his departure, and built the golden bridge for one, in whom, if he had staid, he could only have expected to find a serious enemy.

When Maxwell was gone, Apperton too late recollected that his signature was necessary to various transfers and endorsements, without which he could not carry his plans into execution, and he had recourse to the desperate expedient of forging his name. This scheme succeeded in two or three instances, but de-

tection followed, and nothing but a precipitate retreat saved his life; while his brother-in-law, having been detected in uttering one of the fallacious securities, had been tried, convicted, and as we already know, sentenced to transportation for fourteen years.

If repentance—apparently sincere,—may be permitted to weigh with human beings, as we are taught to believe it does with the Divinity, Apperton's sufferings—his anxiety to atone for his faults, and the care with which, through all his difficulties, he had preserved certain documents which would be of the highest advantage to Maxwell, gave him a strong claim to be forgiven. It appeared that, when he found himself driven to the last extremity, he proceeded to one of the outports, and instead of taking a passage to America in the character of a gentleman, entered himself as a common sailor, of whose vocation he assumed the dress and labour, and literally worked his way before the mast, to the United States; there he was seized with the yellow fever, which acting upon a constitution considerably reduced by the total change of habit and subsistence, he was given over. Nature, however, rallied, and as he was told that a sea

voyage would more probably be serviceable to him than anything else, he forthwith entered himself on board the Jonadab Adams, which he left only to expire in Edward's arms.

The contents of the case, or haversack, to which reference has before been made, were, in the highest degree, important to Maxwell; they consisted of sundry bonds and securities which Maxwell had given, and which, when things came to the worst, Apperton had paid off with the wreck of the property which came into his possession; so that, in point of fact, not only was Maxwell not involved to the amount of a guinea beyond the first great loss, but at the present moment upwards of twenty thousand pounds remained in his name in the three per cents., which Apperton had been unable to get hold of. Thus it appeared, that after all, if Apperton had acted fairly, and contented himself by meeting the misfortunes which assailed him, manfully, he never need have had recourse to crime to atone for what, at worst, might after all have been only indiscretion.

It was, indeed, a wonderful change of scene for Maxwell and his daughter. The old gentleman proceeded to Kate's room, and there divulged to her the particulars which Edward

had related, while the young gentleman and Moss, who hated voyages practically, but very much relished "hearing tell of them," mutually edified each other—the one by detailing, and the other by listening to the history of his progress from Funchal to Cowes. Of course there was now no necessity for further concealment—no need of continued disguise; their business and duty would call them to London, whither, it appeared to Edward Maxwell, he ought at all events immediately to repair, seeing that he had, for the advancement of his own objects, taken upon himself the responsibility of quitting the post which had been confidentially assigned to him.

But was it the positive necessity for his being the bearer of Apperton's last communications, or the pacquet which contained the important securities, that really led him to undertake the expedition to England? No doubt he could better explain the occurrences, and describe the sort of state in which his brother-in-law's mind and feelings appeared to be, at the time of his death than any one else; and it was, above all, a very agreeable thing to be the bearer of favourable intelligence; but none of these, as I believe, would have driven him to the decision of leaving the winepipes and warehouses, if he had

not accidentally discovered the picture of his long sought Maria. It was evident, by her picture being in *that* house, that she must somehow be connected with the people to whom the house belonged. Half an hour's personal communication with his partner would do more to elucidate the mystery than half a year's correspondence, where letters and answers cannot be exchanged with any certainty as to time.

When Kate returned to the drawing-room, she appeared calm and tranquil, but the placidity of her grief was occasionally interrupted by tears, which she could not controul; their cause and origin I do not attempt to seek or display. However, while Maxwell, who retired for the purpose of examining the papers of which Edward was the bearer, Moss and she were engaged in a conversation touching her future prospects, which, it must be admitted, even if delicate in itself, was at all events somewhat premature.

"Well, Kittums," said Godfrey, feeding his nose with a 'huge pinch of snuff, "what 'll the Charley cretur do now?"

"My dear Mr. Moss," said Kate, "how can you, at a moment like this, speak on a subject——"

"Which you do nothing but think about," said Moss. "Bou, Kittums! I know what woman creturs are—who can suppose you ever cared one penny for that sixteen-stringed Jack of a cretur, as died in the hospital?"

"Respect to the dead,—" said Kate.

"Oh! respect to the dead," repeated Moss; "why you might as well say that Hanningham respects *his* father—the worthy gentleman as cut his partner's throat, or shot him, or whatever it was. Did Apperton respect any of *you*, or any of your property, when he was alive, eh?"

"He has made all the atonement in his power," said Kate.

"Rather latish," said Moss. "Suppose he had not accidentally fallen in with Neddums, what would have gone with his atonement? No; he saved his own neck, after having squandered all your money. Now, I want to know where master Somerford is, and what he 'll do?"

"What should he do?" said Mrs. Apperton.

"What!" said Moss. "Come, come, Kittums! none o' your double faces with me—none of your Janus fancies—it 's a good job that the old lord cretur, whoever he was, wouldn't have nothing to say to him, or else——"

"Indeed, Mr. Moss," said Kate, "I must entreat of you to talk of something else. I am sure you would not willingly give me pain; and the conversation has taken a turn which will drive me from the room, if you continue it."

"I hate affectation," said Moss; "but I have done. I suppose you must take a little time to come round, and so till after dinner I 'll have done; but then——"

"Well, well, any time except now," said Kate, glad to parry a dialogue which, while it brought the true nature of her feelings somewhat too painfully before her eyes, agitated and disturbed her beyond endurance. She had lost a husband who had been no husband to her; who had forfeited every claim to her affection or esteem. The news was of so recent a date, that it seemed like a dream, scarcely possible to be real; and then, as Moss said—but which he should not have said—her speculations upon the conduct of Somerford, who had never communicated with her since her return to England, were equally wild and complicated. It was true, that Charles could not correspond with her, because he was ignorant of the name they had assumed, and of the place to which

they had retired; but he knew of their residence in Madeira.

Upon the return of the Maxwells to the drawing-room, the first burst of surprise and sorrow—if there were any—having subsided, the members of the family were able to converse upon the topics, so new and so deeply interesting to them, with calmness and composure. It turned out, that Maxwell still possessed available property to an amount sufficient to afford him a competence in retirement, and after his death to secure his Kate from difficulty or embarrassment; it was therefore agreed upon, that the family should proceed forthwith to London, and Kate, as ladies are always the best correspondents, was deputed to write to Mrs. Hanningham, announcing the events that had occurred, the arrival of Edward, his anxiety to see his partner, and justify his abandonment of his post at Madeira, and to solicit her good offices in procuring them rooms and accommodations in their neighbourhood in London, in which great metropolis it was their intention to arrive in the course of the following evening.

"And now," said Edward to his sister, "now that I have brought you such satisfactory—not satisfactory, I mean decisive—news of your late

husband, what have *you* done for me with regard to by beautiful vision; the mystery about whom is increased in a tenfold degree, by the circumstance which I announced to you about the picture?"

"Do not think me cruel," said the widow; "do not believe that I could trifle with your feelings for a moment, but I have not dared to communicate to your father the discovery you made. Indeed, if you really feel that affection for me, which I have every reason to believe you do, you must evince it, by promising me not to drop one syllable upon the subject of that person at present. If your father were aware that you had seen that portrait, his injunctions with respect to the mention of the subject would be of the strongest kind; therefore occupy yourself for the present in the numerous affairs to which circumstances have drawn your attention. But let me implore you, trust to me to bring *that* matter forward at a season more favourable than the present."

"But surely," said Edward, "when I see Hanningham, I may speak to him on the subject of the picture which I found in his house."

"The pictures were not *his*," said Kate; "I knew of those pictures when you did not,

and mischief incalculable may now ensue from your having dragged them into light. However, with respect to all but the one, I conclude you are indifferent—and mark me! believe me when I tell you, that a question, an observation from you to Hanningham upon the subject of that portrait, destroys at once, inevitably, entirely, and eternally, your hopes, vague as they may be now, about the being upon whom your affections are so devotedly fixed."

"But how came those pictures in his possession?"

"They belonged to his late father," said Katharine; "they were clandestinely removed from England at the time of his execution. None of them should have been seen; this however is a mere error—and may be repaired: but the history which attaches to that young creature is such, that I tell you again, and for the last time, a word relative to the likeness, addressed to your partner, extinguishes all hope about the original, and perhaps would have the effect of breaking off even the mercantile connexion which so happily exists between you now."

Poor Edward, who saw the mystery which he had hoped to dissipate, thicken as he approached it, was considerably distressed at this

solemn declaration of his sister; and the more so, because he reposed the most implicit confidence in her, and was perfectly assured that unless she were well convinced of the necessity of the course she suggested, she would not have advised him to pursue it. He began almost to wish that he had remained where he was, living upon hopes and expectations, with a true resemblance of his idol before him, instead of having put himself in a situation to have those hopes and expectations overthrown, with the loss of the portrait, and with no chance of obtaining the original.

However, the domestic happiness of the family was enough to live on, for one day, at all events, without alloy; and Edward, with a resolution, often made but seldom kept by lovers, determined that he would not think about his mysterious Maria for the next twelve hours. Maxwell's countenance, as he gazed upon his poor daughter, and felt conscious that let what might happen, she would be secure from the buffettings of fortune, and anticipated a return to his former habits and associations, bespoke sentiments which language would feebly describe: even Moss smiled, and grumbled not; and poor old Mrs. Dawes was busier than a bee,

running in and out, and up and down, making preparations for the little family banquet of the day, and their departure for the metropolis on the morrow.

Little did these short-sighted, mole-eyed mortals anticipate what was to happen on that morrow, or what extraordinary changes, even in this changeable state, were to take place within the next eight-and-forty hours; but it is lucky that men and women are not gifted with prescience, unless indeed the gift were universally accompanied by the power and means of avoiding the consequences, which such an instinctive perception would so fearfully exhibit. As it was, the day went on; passions and feelings subsided into a calm interchange of thoughts and affections; and it must be confessed, qualified as all earthly advantages naturally are, by some countervailing evil, the Maxwells had never been so nearly happy as they now were, since the good old times before Mrs. Maxwell died, and Charles Somerford had been sent abroad.

Squills, who to medical ability united personal kindness and assiduity, in behalf of his friends, was very soon let into the mystery, or rather the history, of Edward's arrival, and

his brother-in-law's death, and the earnestness of his manner, and the warmth of feeling which he expressed on the occasion, added to a "double-barrelled" hint of Moss's, that he would be pleased to dine with them the last day of their stay, and moreover would be uncommonly useful in the morning, in getting their luggage down to the pier-head, and civilizing the boatmen, and, in short, smoothing their exit from the island—induced the surgeon, after a brief conference with Kate, to beg him to join the little family party, they hoped not for the last time, although perhaps for the last time *there*. And accordingly Squills prepared himself for the rural banquet, and left strict orders with Mrs. Squills not to send the usual nine o'clock message by the little boy with the glazed hat and the basket, that he was wanted by a patient; an order which she felt extremely well disposed to obey, seeing that she and her daughters, and son-in-law, were going to tea and quadrilles at Miss Wamble's cottage, at number thirty-two.

There was one of the party at Maxwell's who suffered deeply, but who felt bound to silence by the commands of his sister, and the hope of a favourable result to his taciturnity. Edward was restless and agitated, and more beaten than

ever, by finding from Kate that the discovery he had made of the portrait at Madeira, instead of accelerating a favourable termination to his doubts and fears, was in fact a new and almost insurmountable difficulty in the way of settlement. He determined so far, however, to act for himself, as to speak confidentially to his partner Hanningham, 'explain to him all the foregone circumstances, and, if necessary to his future happiness, pledge him to secrecy as far as related to his father.

To a person in Edward's state of mind, the society and conversation of Squills, all dart, point, wit, and epigram, parried and returned by Moss in his old way of pooh poohing his adversary down, was any thing but agreeable. He was not used to the style of dialogue in which they were indulging. Of Count Narli, to whose adventures they were perpetually alluding, he had never heard; what Mardo Paste was he did not know; nor was he interested at all in the minute dissections of the tabbies at Ryde, or the little tittle-tattle of its pier; and it must be observed, that even with a mind attuned to amusement, it requires some little habitude, some little personal knowledge of a humourist, before we are able to taste his wit

or relish his allusions. Edward withdrew from the small drawing-room to stroll about the place; and Kate, under pretence of fatigue by anticipation, retired to rest; so that Maxwell, Moss, and Squills, had the evening to themselves, and made the ambient air redolent with the fumes of cigars until a late hour.

The morning came—the family re-assembled—the boatmen's barrows were at the door. Squills in advance, and in command; Dawes, wrapped up to vapour-bath heat, for fear of the sea-breeze, and pale as a sheet at the prospect of the twenty minutes' voyage she was about to undertake to Portsmouth; Kate, not yet decently weeded as became her state—for at Ryde sea-weeds were all she could have dressed her sorrow in, at so short a notice—was ready before her father; and Edward, whose whole system seemed on wheels, and whose restlessness and anxiety to see Hanningham nothing could controul, was calling his respectable parent, when Mossums was seen standing at the door of "his lodgums," making signs that they would lose the packet, if they did not make haste; which he did, by extending to their extreme length alternately his legs and arms, after the manner of a semaphore, for which character he was about as well qualified as

a turtle; however, he made himself understood, and after a run and a good fresh "blow" along the jetty, the party found themselves mustered, boxes, bundles, parcels, packages, and all, on the deck of the steamer—the funnel smoking, the paddles splashing, and the horn blowing its last parting blast. To the word "Go," the wheels responded musically, and the black boat dashed away the foam from her bows, and plunging through the water like a "thing of life," soon conveyed her living cargo to the back of the Quebec, where the disembarkation took place in as short a space of time as possible.

Having reached Portsmouth, the next step was to ascertain the best and readiest mode of leaving it again. Moss advocated any conveyance which would accommodate four insides, and proposed securing the entire of one of the stage-coaches for that purpose, as being at once the most economical and expeditious, seeing that he and the Maxwells would occupy the seats within, while Mrs. Dawes might take her journey on the roof; but this very judicious suggestion of Godfrey's could not be acted upon, because none of the London coaches were vacant. There was, indeed, an inside place

in one of them, but Godfrey declined it—he had no notion of separation; sink or swim, they would all go together; he was not going up "grumpums" by himself in a corner, with a fat woman, a sick child, a fine lady, and a drunken sailor; and go he would not—so the next best they could do, was to proceed to the George *en masse*, and take counsel there of the landlord, who would no doubt put them on a course of getting to London forthwith, which should at once be agreeable to them, and profitable to himself.

This proposal was instantly agreed to, and the party walked to the inn, followed and surrounded by barrowmen and porters bearing their various packages of luggage. No sooner had they reached the open door than a peal of bells announced their arrival, and the landlord himself—always a welcome sight at a house of public entertainment, because it gives earnest of his intentions to accommodate his customers to the best of his ability, received them on the threshold.

By one of those common efforts of habitual memory, which very often surprise one in similar cases, the moment the landlord saw the party, he recognized Maxwell, not only as a

person known to him by sight, but as bearing the name of Maxwell, and as the Mr. Maxwell who had been at the George some months previous; and with the greatest courtesy greeted him on his return from the Isle of Wight, to which he knew he was going when he last saw him, and whence he naturally concluded he was now coming back.

"Why, Mack, you are known here," said Moss.

"Yes; luckily it does not signify," said Maxwell, "but I never should have flattered myself that I could live so long in mine host's recollection."

The attention and civility of the landlord were beyond praise; and having been ushered into a drawing-room, Maxwell began his propositions as to the journey, by telling him that he was quite surprised at his remembering him so long.

"We seldom lose the recollection of faces we have once had the pleasure of seeing, sir," said the landlord, "especially when we feel pleased at seeing them again."

"You are very kind," said Maxwell; "we want to get to London this evening, and we are at a loss how to manage as to stowage."

"I think, sir," said the landlord, "you could manage with the chariot; the seat behind holds two, and three inside would not be too much in a roomy carriage."

"Ah, Neddums and Dawes in the dickey," said Moss, "and Kittums inside, between Mack and me."

"A most accommodating arrangement," said Edward.

"I must protest against Dawes having an outside place," said Kate; "and, therefore, if there is any means of her getting to town by a coach, we can manage extremely well."

"You shall have your own way," said Maxwell, "and that will make the affair more simple."

Arrangements were made for the accommodation of Dawes, who was hurried breathless at the top of her speed to a coach-office at the Fountain, and packed into a Rocket or a Regulator, whichever it might have been, with all becoming expedition.

"But," said Maxwell, "with respect to the chariot—can we have it all the way through —to town?"

"The chariot, sir," said the landlord; "is your own carriage—the one you left here when you passed through, sir."

"My carriage!" said the surgeon, who had forgotten, in the hurry and bustle of the last few months, that he had left his chariot at the same inn, under directions from Apperton, to let it remain there, till sent for; but in a moment collecting himself, and assuming as composed an air as he could command under the influence of strong surprise, he added, "What, did they never send for it, to town, after all?"

"No, sir," said the landlord, "it has been here ever since, and I believe you will admit that we have taken every care of it."

Moss thought both the "creturs" were crazy —it was all a mystery to him, who knew nothing of the arrangement; but the feelings of Kate and her father, when they saw the well-known vehicle at the door, looking as it did in the bright days of prosperity, were not a little agitated; it recalled a thousand recollections, a thousand bitter pangs, but it was necessary to stifle them, and take it as it came to them, simply as a convenient receptacle for themselves and their luggage. Moss, who had not much sentiment about him, could not understand how a thing built of leather and wood, at a tradesman's in Long Acre, hung upon springs, and pulled about upon wheels, could inspire anything like affection, or excite anything like

pleasure or regret; but he was, nevertheless, quite conscious of the comfort it afforded him, and he threw himself into the corner of it with the greatest aptitude, protesting, however, that it smelt a "leetle mouldy or so."

The travellers started, and proceeded without let or hindrance from Horndean to Petersfield, from Petersfield to Liphook, and from Liphook to Guilford. The day was fine, the country looked lovely, and somehow there was an association of comforts in the journey which Kate felt intensely. The idea of having her beloved father in his own country, journeying to the scene and sphere of all his former life, without the awe of consequences, and in his proper name and character, was delightful to her; even the trifling circumstance of the carriage being their own, seemed to add to the strength of the illusion that every thing had taken a turn, and that bright days were yet in store for them.

Maxwell had an objection to entering London in the broad glare of day, in a chariot once so well known, and which, in its time, was as familiar to the public eye as Mr. Heaviside's putty colour, or Dr. Hooper's green, and accordingly suggested a halt at the White Hart

for a couple of hours, during which Moss proposed, as a mode of overcoming the *ennui* of a country town, a snack of mutton-chops and kidneys, with a "pickled warnut;" indeed, after the proposition of stopping had once been made, no power of mechanism could have been found strong enough to move him forward; and accordingly, the party took possession of that pleasing apartment which commands the point-blank view of the gothic house opposite, and which is decorated with most loyal and religious prints, thus laudably exhibiting the attachment of the landlord to church and state.

It was at one of the windows of this room that Moss amused himself, by watching the little shopping parties of the belles of Guilford and its vicinity, dragged up and shuffled down the precipitous hill in the street, in little phaetons, some double-bodied, with half-starved horses to do the duty—cruelty vans, with skeleton ponies,—and I only regret that space and circumstances do not permit my giving the reader an abstract and brief chronicle of his observations.

The instinct which announces to the camel the approach to water in the desart, was nothing to that which indicated to Moss the advent of a mutton-chop. Long before the step

of the waiter was heard on the staircase, Godfrey had wriggled himself and his arm-chair from the window to the table; his associates acknowledged the potency of his faculties in that way, and followed his example; they had scarcely ranged themselves round the board when the expected cutlet came.

In the middle of their repast, the arrival of a particularly elegant plain, dark olive green travelling carriage and four, with two servants in the rumble, created a sensation—but not of sufficient importance to abstract the "lunchers," who, to do them justice, performed their parts to admiration. After they had concluded the operation, and strayed to the window, Moss's notice was attracted by seeing a tall gentleman in black, looking very attentively at Maxwell's carriage, which had been left in the street in front of the house, and evidently making inquiries concerning it of one of the people belonging to the inn; who it seemed equally clear was unable to afford the information he was seeking.

"Kittums," said Moss, "come here—I'll show you something—promise not to scream out and make a Tom Noddy of yourself. Look here!—here's Charles Somerford himself, if ever I saw him in my life."

Kate approached with caution, although she rather attributed Godfrey's announcement to a joke than to anything like reality. She saw, and in an instant recognized Charles—it was indeed he himself.

Moss proceeded to attract his attention by coughing at the window, in a peculiar manner familiar to Charles's ear, if he recollected it; but Kate drew Mousetrap back, and implored him, as he valued her happiness, her respectability, instantly to come away, and not render her liable to the imputation of following or intruding herself upon her former lover, especially at the very moment when she had heard of the removal of the only obstacle to their union. Moss saw that she was right, and immediately abstained from his proceedings, but nevertheless determined to take upon himself the responsibility of going and speaking to Somerford, if Somerford it should be, and by so doing, lead, as he thought would be best, to a general reconciliation between the parties, who appeared really to have been thrown together by some providential interference for the purpose.

In pursuance of his plan, Moss retired; and it would be difficult to depict the feelings of

Kate as she saw him quit the room—the ardent desire she felt to witness his meeting with Somerford, the manner in which he greeted him, and the sort of feeling he exhibited at the renovation of their friendship. Maxwell and Edward had previously left the inn for a stroll, which in Guilford is generally an interesting thing, seeing that it is a goodly town, and rich in matters of antiquity. Kate, stepping on tiptoe to the window, watched and saw, listened and heard.

"Why, Moss," said Somerford, "is it possible—you here? Where are the Maxwells? I knew it was *their* carriage."

Here the conversation subsided into a low tone; Moss put his arm through Charles's, and walked slowly down the street with him. Kate followed them with her eyes—she saw Charles looking—she saw Moss point with his finger, as if to indicate the very spot where she was she beheld him relating something—what she could not exactly guess—but she saw her own Charles Somerford, hastily break from Moss, and leap, as it were with joy, in the open street; next she saw him turn Godfrey round, and lug him along upwards towards the inn, Moss shaking with the exercise and an April

sensation of laughing and crying. The struggle did not last long; Charles cast off his Mentor, and entering the house, dashed up-stairs. All that Kate saw was his rush into the room; of what subsequently happened, she was utterly unconscious, till she found herself seated on the sopha, Charles tenderly watching her recovery, her father holding her burning hand in his, with Edward by his side, and Godfrey Moss at the round table in the middle of the room, making himself, *sub silentiô*, a particularly dark-brown tumbler of brandy and water.

"This is the most extraordinary, most providential meeting that could have been imagined," said Charles; "I was crossing to Richmond from Sussex, where I have been on some melancholy business; and the idea of intersecting you, whom of all people in the world I was most anxious to meet; at a time, too," added he, in a subdued tone of voice, "when our meeting might be so satisfactory——"

"Ah! well Charley boy," said Moss, "what is to be, is; and what will be, will: and so now come none of your preaching—come along with us. We 'll carry you up to town—there's a place outside along with Neddums, and you two creturs can talk over your love affairs."

"What," said Charles, "has he any love affairs?"

"No, no," said Maxwell; "nonsense—they are only joking."

Ned and Charles exchanged looks, which induced the latter to think there was no joke in the matter.

"But won't that do?" said Moss; "that's a good arrangement."

"I am going to Richmond," said Charles; "and must——"

"How d'ye travel?" said Moss.

"I have a carriage here," said Somerford.

"Oh!" said Moss; "that comes of Indy—

'When I'm rich, I rides in chaises.'

That's the way, is it?—walks about with a sprig of jasmine in his button-hole, and does um Dandy."

A gentle tap at the door produced the permission to "come in;" and a servant in black, standing six feet two without his shoes, with buckskins and boots which would have made Brummell in his day, jealous, presented himself.

Moss stared, and was about to be facetious; the Maxwells were rather puzzled to know who was wanted; when the man, approaching Charles,

said in a low voice, "The horses are ready, my lord, whenever your lordship is."

This little speech startled the whole party.

"Order them round, then," said Charles; "we are all going, I fancy," added he, addressing his companions, having already seen that Maxwell's carriage was prepared for starting.

"Yes, my lord," said the servant, and departed.

A moment's pause succeeded this short scene.

"I believe," said Charles, "my change of station in the world is a novelty to you: you are not aware of my accession to the title of my grandfather."

"Grand——who?" said Moss.

"Pray be quiet, dear Godfrey," said Maxwell; who, between ourselves, had an inherent affection for a lord—even for the youngest Irish baron, or the silliest Irish bishop—I am not quite sure whether it would not have gone down to the depths of a lord mayor of York—"how d'ye mean, Charles?"

"To you, my dear sir," said Somerford, "and your's, I am, and always shall be, Charles Somerford; but to the world I am Lord Lessingham. Ask me nothing about it now, because I have not time to tell, nor you to hear, the whole of a

very extraordinary history; but if you will do that, which I think will be a wiser thing than going on to town to-night, come with me to Richmond *en masse*, I will exert my first right of *seigneurie* by receiving you, and giving you, at all events, a warm and hospitable reception."

Kate did not know what to say or to do: there was an apparent impropriety in her going on a visit to Charles, even though he were a lord, (which she could scarcely bring herself to believe,) at the moment when she had just heard of her husband's death; besides she had no maid. Dawes, who to be sure was but an antiquated specimen of a soubrette, was absent, and there were a thousand other reasons. However, a sort of compromise was made; and it was agreed that Kate and her father should, at all events, travel in his lordship's carriage as far as Kingston, and that Ned and Godfrey Moss should discuss the events of the day, *tête-à-tête*, in Maxwell's chariot; an arrangement to which Moss gladly agreed, as giving him more room, taking particular care, however, upon starting, to let the post-boys understand that the old gentleman with the white head in my lord's coach was to pay for the horses.

In the course of their progress to Kingston, where Lord Lessingham took his leave of them for his villa, all those events and circumstances which are already known to the reader, were communicated by the noble baron to his old and esteemed friends; and it was also arranged, at Katharine's wish, that she and her father should proceed direct for London to Hanningham's, where they were expected; an arrangement which was sanctioned by Charles, only on the condition that on the following day they would pay him a visit in his retirement, to which he felt a desire to introduce them, not only for the gratification of feelings personal to himself, but that he might, instantly and under the roof of that repentant grandfather to whom he owed all, sanctify, as it were, the resolution he had never abandoned, of making Katharine his wife, should the opportunity ever offer itself.

At Kingston they separated; and the surgeon's carriage proceeded, *via* Putney, to the lodgings of the Hanninghams; Lord Lessingham, however, having seized on one of the party as a hostage, whom he promised to deliver up by two o'clock on the following day. This was Edward. He saw he was out of spirits; he was anxious to ascertain the cause of his chagrin,

and if there were any means in his power of overcoming it. Besides, he was quite alone at Richmond, and the suddenly subsiding into solitude, after the excitement of the morning, would have been doubly irksome. So, overcome by all the persuasions which were made use of, Edward, whose anxiety to get to London was a little qualified by the certainty that he should have an opportunity of talking privately and confidentially with Somerford that evening, agreed to the kind proposal of his noble friend, and accompanied him to his villa.

The day terminated, as far as the Maxwells were concerned, in a happy reception by Hanningham and his wife. None of these, Moss knew, and when he came into the drawing-room, and saw Wilson and Miss Wilson, and some other strangers seated there, he stopped short, told Kittums to say nothing about him, and rolled himself and his portmanteau off to his club, where he dined at his ease, took his full swig of port, and the *chasse* which he generally adopted, promising to call the next day and begin his new acquaintance, before he was tired with a seventy mile journey, and a six mile voyage.

The greetings and recognitions were, on all

hands, warm and agreeable; and the account of the day's adventures was received with the greatest pleasure and sympathy by Katharine's female friends. Hanningham and Maxwell entered into a lengthened and interesting conversation in a corner of the room; and old Wilson whispered Kate, that, let who in the world be happy, *he* was the happiest man in existence.

In such a state of perfect bliss, what a cruelty it would be to introduce any topic likely to curdle the mass of joy: let us therefore wish the assembled party good night, not, however, without the expectation of reaping a "pretty particular harvest" of adventures on the morrow.

CHAPTER XII.

Submit thy fate to heaven's indulgent care,
Though all seems lost, 'tis impious to despair.
The tracts of Providence like rivers wind—
Here, run before us—there, retreat behind;
And though immerged in earth from human eyes,
Again break forth, and more conspicuous rise.

HIGGONS.

NOTHING could have answered better, than the whole arrangement of the family party; for Edward, who, being a stranger to the Wilsons, would naturally have felt shy and ill at ease in their company, while bursting with anxiety to open his heart to Hanningham, passed with his old friend Lord Lessingham, an evening of perfect enjoyment. Those who know what love is, and what lovers are, will immediately comprehend that he talked of nothing from dinner time until bed-time, but of himself and his mysterious Maria—to Charles he unburthened his whole heart, and so deeply interested him in his fate,

that his Lordship pledged himself to aid his designs and further his views with regard to her, to the utmost extent of his power and ability.

This was consolatory, agreeable, and encouraging to Edward; but there were other points gained during their *tête à tête*, which were even more important to the interests of the Maxwell family, as matters now stood. Charles, aware that in so early a stage of Kate's widowhood, any declaration made to her, of his feelings towards her personally, would be highly indelicate, was equally conscious that he might, without binding Edward to anything like secrecy or concealment of the fact from his sister, distinctly express to him, that the sole object of his ambition, the great aim of his life, was to secure her hand as his wife, when the season which the custom of the world has assigned to weeds and weeping should have passed by. It is true, after Charles's conduct and conversation during their journey towards town, Kate could have had no doubt of the constancy and sincerity of his affection for her; but he appeared anxious, beyond any thing that might be implied, to bind himself to her brother, as to one, who would hereafter hold him responsible for the declaration he made.

Edward, in relating all the proceedings of

Apperton to his newly found friend, only realized, as his lordship said, the opinion he formed of the man at his first and only interview—the extent of his atrocities were even yet to be developed, for it seemed that after having been arrested, after having given notice of taking the benefit of the insolvent act, and after having involved three or four persons who still had faith in his honour and credit, as his sureties for the rules of the King's Bench Prison, to which he was committed, his criminal transactions began so rapidly to divulge themselves, that all considerations were sacrificed to his personal safety, and he fled the country, leaving the unhappy dupes, who had placed a confidence in him, to reimburse the marshal of the prison in the whole amount of the debts for which he had been confined.

When the morning arrived, and Edward found himself in the terrestrial paradise which now belonged to his friend, it still seemed like a dream—a bright, beautiful dream, wanting but one additional charm to make it perfect. Richmond, that looks every day one sees it, as if it were dressed to look lovely on that day alone, was in all its beauty. There was a repose, a fragrance, a charm about it all, that kept the

friends lingering on the lawn, still talking on their favourite themes, until two o'clock, when they resolved—still continuing their conversation in the same strain no doubt—to proceed to London to join the family party; for whose reception, at the villa in the evening, Lord Lessingham had given directions that every preparation should be made. Accordingly they started for Town, where stranger and more important events had been in the course of occurrence, than even they could anticipate.

After an evening, perhaps even more interesting to the parties concerned, than that, which the two friends passed at Richmond, the family coterie in London assembled at breakfast; Hanningham's feelings were evidently so much excited that he could scarcely keep himself quiet, and old Maxwell and Wilson sat together, enjoying between themselves, not exactly a joke—for it appeared to be something more important than that—but a secret, which evidently gave them the most heartfelt satisfaction, but which they seemed determind not to impart for the benefit of their friends.

"To day, at twelve o'clock," said Hanningham, "I am to fulfil a duty which I owe to the reputation of a beloved parent, whose name has

been branded and whose character has been stigmatized, as a murderer. The real culprit, as I have already told you, has admitted himself the man—to-morrow he suffers for another crime, and hopes to make some atonement for his sins, by confessing to day, before a competent authority, the whole of the bloody transaction, in which he, and he alone, was concerned. It will be most satisfactory to me," continued Hanningham, "if Mr. Maxwell, and Mr. Moss, (for Godfrey had gone to breakfast with them—the new laid eggums, and the hammums, were too strong an inducement to be withstood,) and Mr. Wilson, would accompany me to Newgate, where the proceeding is to take place, as the more witnesses there are, to such a solemn act of justice, the more gratifying it will be to a son, anxious for the reputation of a parent."

"What!" said Moss, "must we go poking our noses through the iron bars and fetters—all among the clankum creturs wot kills one another?"

"A little sacrifice of personal comfort," said Maxwell, "for a few minutes, Moss, will be amply repaid, by the satisfaction you will derive from seeing Hanningham made happy."

"Oh, I am ready," said Moss,—'I can't walk, you know—carry me anywhere—I'll go."

And accordingly, preparations were made; and as time drew on, Hanningham's carriage was at the door, and within it, were stowed the three old gentlemen, and the noble minded son, whose whole heart and soul were in the vindication of his calumniated parent.

"This," said Wilson, as they passed along the streets, "is a most curious—a most wonderful event. I am scarcely prepared for what I am to see, in the dreadful receptacle to which we are going;—my heart sickens."

"You must bear up," said Maxwell; "it is absolutely essential you should be with us—screw your courage to the sticking place—your rustication in Fayal has not so entirely uncivilized you, that you cannot endure the sight of a prison."

"Pray remain with us," said Hanningham; "assure yourself you will be repaid for the struggle."

They reached the door of the keeper's house, into which they were admitted. They there found, already arrived, the persons who were to receive the confession officially, for the Secretary of State for the home department—a process which Moss, who had but a confused notion of law, and whose nerves, moreover, were entirely

unstrung by the sight of certain iron bars placed perpendicularly on the outer side of the windows of the very smart apartment in which they were assembled, could not help thinking a work of supererogation. "It may be all vastly well," thought he, "for Hanningham to establish his father's innocence in the minds of those who knew him, but what the deuce is the use of troubling the Secretary of State or the Crown about a cretur who has been dead this year and a half, or whatever it is?"

After a certain degree of muttering and murmuring, a rattling of keys and clattering were heard—the door of the room opened, and, preceded by a couple of turnkeys, the "procession" moved through sundry dark and gloomy passages, to the door of the cell in which Hall was incarcerated. It was opened, and by a dim light the visitors discovered the unhappy culprit stretched on his pallet, in earnest conversation with the ordinary of the prison.

The agitation of Wilson at the sight before him was so great, that it was with difficulty he could be supported to the seat which the clergyman gave up to him. Hall raised himself to receive the expected visitors; and the official person who accompanied them, taking a can-

dle, (the only light in the cell,) in his hand, read over slowly and distinctly the confession which Hall had made, and which he now attested by his signature. Wilson, who had attentively watched every syllable of this declaration, became more violently affected towards its conclusion, and when Hall signed the paper —a mingled scream and groan burst from the old gentleman, who, in a moment after, fell senseless on the floor.

"What has happened?" said Hall. "More mischief—more murder—am I destined to destroy—destroy—destroy!"

"No," said Hanningham; "calm yourself—compose yourself—this is nothing. He will recover—raise him, bathe his temples: he will be better in a minute."

"He!" screamed Hall, as his eyes glared on the pale face of the agitated sufferer.—"Who is he!—Great God preserve me—it is my friend —my master!—Hanningham himself!—safe, safe—alive and safe!"

The parties to this scene were now so highly excited, that it was deemed expedient to remove them from it; but Hall had seized the hand of Wilson, or rather the elder Hanningham—for Hanningham it *was*—and grasped it

with a firmness which resisted all efforts to disengage it. Tears flowed in torrents from the wretched culprit's eyes, and it was not until both had so far recovered, that the one could pronounce the word of forgiveness, and the other hear it, with something like composure, that they were separated.

After such a meeting, such a discovery, and such a parting, it may be easily imagined that the party were not a little relieved by a return to the light and air, even of London. Hanningham had achieved a triumph worthy of a son, to which he had been led while earnestly endeavouring to evince his gratitude for conduct on the part of Maxwell which alone could have rendered his success effieient. What Maxwell did, remains to be seen.

When they reached home, they found Lord Lessingham and Edward waiting their arrival. Mrs. Apperton and Miss Wilson were out, gone shopping, in order to procure the necessary materials for the former's widowhood; for although decency and propriety rendered it absolutely necessary that she should assume mourning, neither the period of her husband's death, nor the general character of their connexion, rendered it imperative upon her to con-

sign herself to positive seclusion, or deny herself the privilege of choosing her own crape, and arranging her own love.

Edward and young Hanningham were, of course, in an instant engaged on topics of mutual interest; and the elder Hanningham was, by the general advice of the party, consigned to his room and sopha, to re-collect his scattered thoughts and spirits, after a scene which not only cleared his character from crime, but restored him to his family and friends, and to society in general.

It was after Edward and his friend had in some degree satisfied themselves with their conversation, that Maxwell, taking advantage of the temporary absence of young Hanningham and his wife, Mrs. Apperton, and Miss Wilson, (all of whom knew the story,) disclosed to his son and Lord Lessingham the nature of the secret which Kate had discovered—on which his fate and reputation had hitherto hung, but which, now that his professional career was ended, and the innocence of Hanningham established, was no longer of importance.

It appeared that the body of Hanningham had been procured by one of Maxwell's agents for the purpose of dissection, and had, on the stormy

evening of the dreadful day of his supposed execution, been brought in the usual manner to the private entrance of his residence. That after the departure of his pupils, Maxwell had retired to his study, and before returning to the drawing-room, visited the receptacle for the dead, to see that all was safe for the night. Here, to his amazement and surprise, his ears were assailed by a faint groan and a sigh—he carried his light to the spot whence the sound proceeded, and saw, not only that the human being before him, was not dead, but actually breathing and moving.

He was aware who the man was—he had taken great interest in the case—in the examination—the charge—the trial, and the condemnation, and he had always maintained an opinion of his innocence; he was here—before him—alone—and in his power. To preserve him was to entail ruin on himself; for besides bringing down the heaviest penalty of the law in furthering his escape, the developement of the fact would involve the disclosure of the system by which the surgical theatres are furnished with subjects. All was at stake: Hanningham had been declared guilty of murder—had, in the eye of the world, suffered the extreme

punishment of the law and was dead—not only legally, but as the people believed, physically.

He paused to consider—a blow would end the struggle between returning vitality and death—a blow, too, which it was almost his duty to give, and such a blow as *in more than one similar case has been given*, was all that was wanting to end the mystery; but could he, feeling, as he did, that the man had been unjustly convicted,—could he complete what the law had failed to consummate? The case was trying—fearful—hazardous—Maxwell, however, had made up his mind.

First, securing the door which separated the dwelling-house from the surgery, he raised the unhappy sufferer, and placed him in a sitting posture—he found life and animation rapidly returning—he bled his unconscious patient—the blood flowed—flowed freely, and the wretched sufferer soon began to seem conscious of the objects round him; but it required care, and patience, and time, and attention to manage such a resuscitation. These Maxwell devoted to it.

It would be useless and unprofitable to go through the details of the recovery of the unfortunate Hanningham, who at length became sufficiently renovated to be removed by Maxwell, with great care and caution, up the back

stairs of the house to his own room. The period he chose for the transit, was during the supper-hour of the servants; he felt secure that his path would not then be crossed by any of the establishment: he succeeded in assisting, almost carrying, his trembling companion to the apartment; there arrived, he furnished him with clothes from his own wardrobe, administered such cordials as he considered essential to his restoration, and then, locking the door of his room, and bringing away the key, left him in safety while he went down to join his family, as if he had been only pursuing the ordinary course of his studies.

It was on that night, the reader will recollect, that a sound of something falling heavily in the room above, alarmed the family party. Hanningham, miscalculating his strength, had ventured to attempt to cross the apartment, but growing giddy, fell backwards into the chair whence he had essayed to move. Maxwell hurried up, and soon ascertained the cause of the noise; it will also be recollected that Katharine followed abruptly, and, rushing into the apartment, beheld her father in the act of administering assistance to the pale and agitated stranger.

If, as she often afterwards said, her father had then simply bound her to secresy as to what she had actually seen, without permitting her to know more of the history with which the exhibition was connected, all would have been well; for she would have felt solemnly engaged never to reveal it, and even if she had violated her parent's confidence, she could have told nothing to inculpate him; but he, in his agitation, and in the desire of obtaining an entire assurance of fidelity from his child, by making the most unreserved confidence, imparted the whole fact to her, expressing, at the same time, his determination to save the unfortunate man, or perish in the attempt.

With this view, after the family had retired to rest, he and his weakened companion, somewhat restored by the care which had been bestowed on him, quitted the house, and proceeded to the outskirts of the town, in a direction which Hanningham knew his daughter might easily reach; there Maxwell attended him, staid with him through the night, nor left him until he found him safely housed, and in the care of his exemplary child, whose unceasing and unremitting affection and attention to her suffering parent during his tedious im-

prisonment, and in the day of death itself, had been beyond all praise.

"It was after having made these arrangements," said Maxwell, "that I returned home, and was soundly rated by Mousetrap for pottering all over the country, guinea hunting. I did not defend myself against this charge, I recollect; but I had great and manifold difficulties to contend with after that. To send Hanningham to his son at Madeira would have been to betray the whole business, in which, of course, I could not personally appear; however, I managed to engage a passage for him and his daughter to Fayal, a place which they only knew by name, and certainly never expected to visit. Thither they were to go under the name of Wilson."

"Our confidential agent," exclaimed Edward—"now I see."

"But the difficulty," continued Maxwell, "was to elude the vigilance of observation between London and Portsmouth, where the vessel bound to Fayal, lay; therefore it was, that I took the precaution to engage, for a few pounds, a passage round from the river to Portsmouth, in a ship called the Whilelmina."

"Captain Randolph?" said Edward.

"Exactly so," said Maxwell; "and in the dusk of the evening before she sailed, I contrived to bring Hanningham in my carriage to the water-side from the lodging I had secured for him, and saw him safe into the merchant ship, from which he was not to depart until his transhipment into the Fayalese brig, at Spithead; and by midnight they were under way."

"And the daughter, sir—Miss Hanningham," said Charles.

"She remained behind in town, for a day or two, to avoid any suspicion," said Maxwell, "when she proceeded direct to join her father, and arrived on board the vessel where he was, on the evening after he had been put into her, from the ship. Much odium did I incur—much calumny did I encounter, I believe, from the necessity which occurred of my meeting that lovely girl in various parts of the town—for, of course, I never dared venture to the place by daylight where her father lay concealed. Even my own son, I believe, suspected me of some improper flirtation, and once took upon himself to watch my proceedings in the green park."

"The Green Park!" cried Edward, leaping from his chair in ecstacy. "Do you mean, my dearest father—I say, do you mean that the be-

loved creature, who was your companion in the Green Park on that day, is Hanningham's sister—the sister of my friend? This, then, accounts for the picture."

"The picture!" said Maxwell; "I know nothing about pictures, Ned—but here—here is the charming original herself!"

And at that moment the folding doors between the drawing-rooms were thrown open, and the blushing, trembling Maria Hanningham sank into the arms of Mr. Edward Maxwell, as naturally as if they had been prepared for the event by a dozen rehearsals.

"Now," said Maxwell, "you are fully aware of the importance of the secret I had to conceal—now you see the danger and difficulty which would have accrued to us all, by any countenance or furtherance of the connexion between Maria and you—and now you are able to judge of the trials I have undergone, the reward of which, and of my earnest prayers to Providence has been, this general restoration of us all, to peace and happiness."

Maxwell, in the midst of the good feeling which really and truly actuated him throughout the whole of this complicated business, had, it will be seen, the good taste not to give the

real and true reason why he decidedly objected to his son's marriage with Maria. The entire acquittal of Hanningham had set the question at rest, and what use was there, in recurring to past difficulties?

It was now Maria's turn to explain to Edward that her acquaintance with the police officer whom she met in the park, was made during her visits to the prison where her father was confined; that she put herself under his orders, to escape from Edward's importunities; that on the day he chased her to the ship, she did not see or recognize him, but that she went purposely by water from London to meet and receive her father, who, strange to say, was actually brought to the stairs on the Surry side of the river in Maxwell's carriage, at the very moment that Ned was whistling and kicking his heels with the watermen at the landing-place on the other. Maria went ashore with the captain, as the waterman said, and returned to her residence, but not *viâ* Cockatoo Hall, which she never had visited, and which accounted for Mrs. Randolph's indignant denial of any acquaintance, on the part of her husband, with "no sort of young ladies whatsomever."

Of all the gabblings and tattlings since the

days of Babel, never was anything like the noise in Hanningham's drawing-room at this period. Lord Lessingham and Kate in one corner; Maria and Edward in another; Mr. Hanningham, and old Maxwell, and Moss in another: servants coming in—servants going out—it was perfectly confusing, astounding, and overwhelming.

"Pray," said Moss, when something like a calm occurred, "when shall I send for the vicar of Fudley cum Pipes? I see that 'll be the end on't."

Nobody answered the appeal; and if Kate had said anything, she perhaps would have preferred some other joiner, since the last job the vicar had performed, had not turned out exactly according to the expectation of the parties most concerned.

The elder Hanningham, in the course of an hour or two, found himself sufficiently strong to re-join the party; and, as he expressed himself, his happiness was beyond the lot of man; and he left those around him to judge what his feelings must be towards Maxwell.

"I suspect," said Lord Lessingham, "that a trial will be made of your affection for that family—a Maxwell, a friend of mine, has a de-

sign, and a serious one too, of robbing you of the greatest treasure you possess, Mr. Hanningham."

"She *is* a treasure," said the old man, comprehending his lordship's meaning; "God bless her! Through my imprisonment, my trial, in my cell, nay to the very foot of the scaffold, was this beloved child my solace, my companion, my support; and to see her restored to the world —to happiness, I hope—repays all I have suffered. Mr. Maxwell," continued he, addressing Ned, "personally acquainted we have been but a short time—my son has told me your character—you are worthy of your father. If I have indeed a treasure to bestow, it is your's—dearer, as it is to me, than my heart's blood."

The young people, apparently not at all disinclined to take advantage of any opportunity for so doing, again rushed into each other's arms; whereupon Moss, rising out of a soft downy armed-chair in which he had been ensconced, after the fashion of a diamond in cotton, said, "Well, now we have had enough of all this trash and gammon—what time do we dine?"

"I propose, Mr. Moss," said Lord Lessingham, "to have the honour of receiving you all at Richmond."

"Richmond!" said Moss; "what not dine before *that?*"

"Every arrangement is made for your reception," said Charles, "and if Mrs. Apperton and Mrs. Hanningham will undertake to chaperone Miss Hanningham, I, on the part of myself and Ned Maxwell, pledge ourselves to entertain you and the elders, in a manner quite consistent with your views of comfort."

"Have you got a French cook, my lord?" said Moss.

"No; but a very liberal translation of one into English," said Lord Lessingham.

"Because, if you have got one of those night-capped creturs," said Moss, "that sprinkle salmon all over with capers and butter, by way of making it nice, and cram crawfish into turkies, with lumps of pudding round them, by way of sauce, I'd advise you to poke him into the river, and let one of your kitchen maids do me a nice hot mutton chop, with the gravy in him, or roast me a leg of the cretur entire."

"You shall order what you please, my dear Moss," said Charles; "you will find my villa Liberty Hall. You shall have your cigar, and 'ginnums-and-water,' out under a great tree; a monkey to play with, a cockatoo to worry,

pigeons to feed, and one of the prettiest of the still-room maids to bring you the peas."

"That 's right, Charley, my boy," said Moss; "you are one of the true fellows after all—no spoiling you, by making you a lord, at all events."

"I am likely to be spoiled," said Charles, "if good fortune and unmerited happiness can effect it. But we must not lose time in moralizing, out of regard to your appetite, Moss: there are the carriages at the door, which will carry us all, and our servants—so let us away, and pass a day of happiness after an age of sorrow."

"Come," said Maxwell; "and let this be ever impressed on your minds, my children—that however adverse what is profanely and idly called fate, may appear to set against us in this world, a firm reliance on the bounty of Providence will never be disappointed. There scarcely ever was a more striking instance of retributive justice, than that which our own history exhibits—let others take courage from the results, and, while they put their trust in Heaven, fear no evils which assail them on earth."

Moss, who, although brother to the vicar of Fudley-cum-Pipes, had no particular turn for

sermons, especially when delivered by the laity, now began to fidget and unsettle the ladies, who proceeded to put themselves in readiness to accept the very gratifying invitation of Lord Lessingham; and in less than half-an-hour the happy party left town for his beautiful villa. His lordship, Mrs. Apperton, Maxwell and Moss, filling the Britscha, and the Hanninghams, Miss Hanningham, and Ned Maxwell, stowed away in the barouche.

One additional line only is necessary to dispose of another performer in our drama—Mrs. Overall, *ci-devant* Epsworth. The Major, two months after his marriage, was expatiating earnestly upon some favourite topic, at the head of one of the marble staircases of his economical palace at Florence, when, in the enthusiasm of the moment, he lost his balance, pitched over the ballustrades on his head, and was killed. His widow remained disconsolate only six months; and one of the first persons who paid Lord Lessingham a visit at Richmond to congratulate him upon his accession to his title, was his old flame, returned to England, re-married to an Italian nobleman, with a landed estate of sixty-eight pounds per annum, which conferred upon her the title of Countess Latatatarina.

It would, under the circumstances, be scarcely desirable to carry this history any farther, lest we should find in the sequel that the widowhood of Mrs. Apperton were measured by the patience of her friend and cousin, the Countess. It will perhaps be sufficient to say, that at this present writing, there does not exist a happier couple than Lord and Lady Lessingham, or than Mr. and Mrs. Edward Maxwell; that the old gentlemen play chess as well as ever; and that Godfrey Moss, sick of the absurdity of all "worldy creturs," has settled himself down in happy retirement, where he finds—

——"Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and '*faults*' in everything."

THE END.

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